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Masters Thesis

The Shareable, The Conversation, and The News.

An analysis of content posted on Twitter by New Zealand news journalists
and news organisations.

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Thank you for putting up with me.

#lifesavers #thesislife

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ABSTRACT

This research endeavours to assess the relationship between Twitter, journalists, news organisations, and content. This research aimed to drill into the content on Twitter and to what extent this content can tell us about the intentions and communications of New Zealand news journalists and organisations. By examining practising journalists and news organisations on Twitter, and using news values as a unit of measure, this research helps to look at the extent tweeted content reflects traditional news values. Lasorsa et al. (2012) have become a flagship study for social media and journalism, and this study seeks to build upon their methodology and employ O'Neill and Harcup's 2001 news values to help assess the content produced by New Zealand journalists and news organisations. This research collected New Zealand journalists' and news organisations' tweets over a two-week time frame. From the 5,614 tweets collected (4252 from news organisations and 1362 from news journalists), the data showed evidence of distinct differences between journalists and news organisations Twitter feeds. Journalists showed a mix of personal, conversational and news content, and news organisations displayed a firmer representation of news content with elements of sensationalism and design tactics present. The importance of this research is to help address social media's growing popularity and its integration with traditional journalism norms and routines.

INTRODUCTION

The journalism industry has faced its fair share of challenges over the past century, but few can rival social media in terms of impact on the flow of communication. Society tends to underestimate the role and impact of journalism and its importance despite changes in communication methods. Social media is the biggest contender in challenging the means of communication, and of the social media contenders, Twitter is a significant one. From a reading of western based studies, Twitter might not be a prominent factor in influencing news media, but it is contributing to the news cycle in an innovative format. Furthermore, journalism is a key element in the mediascape, and any assessment of the relationship between Twitter and communications invites the analysis of this element. This research sets out to examine one aspect of the relationship between journalism and Twitter, that is the content of tweets written by journalists.

Logan Molyneux highlights the importance of social media research for understanding of contemporary news media, as “people turn to journalists on Twitter as curators or guides in the sea of digital information” (2014: 2). Twitter is an important resource for the public but a deeper issue also arises: the new platform bears scrutiny in terms of how its content might differ to traditional formats. The comparison between the daily newspaper and a smartphone in terms of accessing content does help address that there are both strengths and weaknesses in accessing news content in established forms, and in turn, strengths and weaknesses that come from utilising social media as a means of communication. Tucker (2008) says that there is a structure to news content that sets it

apart from all other forms of writing. Thus, the focus of this research is to look at journalists' news content on social media and how it differs from the classic news story form.

Background of the Problem

In November of 2015, New Zealand journalist Kim Baker Wilson documented the return of New Zealand's internationally known All Blacks rugby team. Baker Wilson's reportage on Twitter did not resemble traditional news, but rather insight into his own excitement and frustration of the day's events. The lack of traditional reporting formats sparks questions around the use of Twitter as a part of the news cycle. New Zealand journalists' apparent relaxed approach on Twitter prompted this study, and there is currently no substantial research of New Zealand journalists who are active on Twitter. Previous foreign research provides some insight into the operations of journalists on Twitter in Western societies and has the potential to be tailored to multiple public spheres, geographic locations, and social media environments, but that research is also in its early stages.

Stephen Barnard argues that there is an influential impact of new media on journalism practices; however, the hybridization of new media platforms and traditional journalism practice is normalised (2014:14). The ingraining of social media alongside traditional journalism practice appears to have resulted in a general acceptance of established ways that news content is produced and presented. There is no doubt that journalists are doing their best to implement social media networks within the news cycle;

however, the extent to which these social media networks are actually changing the news content requires further research.

Critiques of journalists in the past dictate the importance of maintaining journalism's professional standards throughout change. "Professional norms are clear: journalists are expected to keep their politics and personal opinions to themselves" (Lasorsa et al. 2012: 23). However, due in part to Twitter not imposing any form of regulation or guidance for news content and a lack of clarity in news organisations about how to adapt their work for a new platform there is room for such professional standards to slip. Understanding and respecting traditional journalistic norms, routines or tendencies is what separates journalism from other forms of writing. The central issues this research focuses on are two-fold: one, that previous studies focus on journalism routines and duties rather than news content (Lasorsa et al. 2012, Hermida 2010, Hedman 2016, and Singer 2005); and, two, social media's rapid growth means that the journalism industry does not appear to be adapting appropriately (Brautovic et al. 2013, and Barnard 2014). Too many studies are removed from journalism and position themselves on the outside looking in, and while this distance can grant the natural objectivity and broad generalisations or speculations of the journalism industry, this does not help foster and grow the journalism industry.

The Purpose and Significance of This study

The purpose of this study is to take a snapshot of how social media impacts the content produced by journalists and news organisations in New Zealand, and assess what

kinds of content are disseminated on Twitter and what this content can tell us about the priorities in the news process. Previous studies have argued a myriad of viewpoints, but a major strand of research highlights that the content appears to be driven by the desire for journalists to build relationships with their followers, rather than execute information gathering processes (Molyneux 2014 and Lasorsa et al. 2012). There is an emphasis that journalists need to embrace and adapt to social media to best serve the public interest. Nonetheless, studies are still mentioning that social media is challenging the norms of the industry, and posit a tension between social media and journalism. The evidence collected thus far concludes that the lack of regulatory bodies on social media allows journalists a high level of autonomy to operate independently from their parent news organisations (Barnard 2014 and Brautovic et al. 2013), suggesting that there may be a wide range of practices, raising a number of questions about how Twitter intersects with journalism. Furthermore, the purpose of this study is to open discussion about the content produced on modern social media, and suggest directions for future research that might inform best industry practice.

Primary Research Questions

It has been expressed in the past that journalists find Twitter a great asset (Barnard 2014) and that there needs to be more research to help make more sense of the modern journalism industry's use of Twitter. The primary question of this study encompasses content and presentation of news content on Twitter. As the study unfolded, social media's unpredictability led to a number of changes in how the content was studied, but the study remained consistently focused on three research questions. These are:

Research Question 1: What content do New Zealand journalists produce on Twitter?

Research Question 2: What content do news organisations produce on Twitter?

Research Question 3: Are there any differences in the priorities in news content of journalists versus news organisations' Twitter feeds?

Expanding on these research questions, the focus is on the trends and patterns evident in quantitative data, and what observational evidence there is to suggest that there are changes and challenges in the representation of news content. Addressing these research questions helps to address the inconsistencies with the use of Twitter in the New Zealand journalism industry and to help develop stronger arguments around how to better equip journalists with using Twitter. Furthermore, it will help to address the more prominent forms of content and what it could convey or promote to other Twitter users.

Hypotheses

The research questions will be addressed through the exploration of two hypotheses that relate to existing research on trends in western democratic societies. There are two primary hypotheses within this research. The first is that New Zealand news journalists on Twitter produce a mixture of personal and professional content, and offer more insight into their private lives than in traditional news content and place more emphasis on personal representation over news-related content.

The second hypothesis predicts that New Zealand news organisations on Twitter demonstrate a dispersed array of news values reflected in the content, and are stricter with the types of content present on their Twitter feeds than individual journalists. Considering the presentation of content by news organisations on Twitter allows some insight into the news process. Furthermore, this can allow an insight into the framing and presentation of content.

Research Design and Theoretical Framework

This research engages with O'Neill and Harcup's invitation to build studies around news values (2001, 2016). Originally established by Galtung and Ruge's 1973 study on foreign news content, news values research address the priorities of the news story. Utilising news values in this research help illustrate the news landscape and highlight the priorities in Twitter-based news. This research draws on content analysis based methodologies, as there is not one established, effective way of studying journalists and journalism on Twitter (Brautovic et al. 2013, Lasorsa et al. 2012, and Hedman 2016). The research collects tweets from over a two-week time frame from two sample groups: a representative sample comprised of a cross section of New Zealand journalists, and a purposive sample comprised of six New Zealand news organisations. The data collected is coded to distinguish between categories of content type, and the news content is assessed using news values.

Theories that help shape this research deal with the implications new media pose for the practice of journalism. Marshall McLuhan's "the medium is the message" is renowned for implying that it is not the content, rather it is the means by which we obtain, process, and consume content that constitutes the underlying meaning of a medium. McLuhan argued that "characteristics of all media, means that the 'content' of any medium is always another medium" (2001: 203). As paradoxical as this statement appears, the concept of light can help exemplify content. Light can be emitted by various sources such as cell phone screens, light bulbs, or the sun. The source of light is how the perception of the light is analysed or judged and can be impeded by social value. For example, sunlight can be seen as harsh in some social structures and as a luxury in others and is measured in relation to the level of acceptance in the public sphere

The normalisation of social media use has meant that any departure from traditional journalistic norms on social media has been under-examined. A developing theoretical perspective, the "Normalisation of News Media" argument has started to gain traction in terms of the importance of the relationship between journalism and social media (Singer 2006, Lasorsa et al. 2012, and Molyneux 2014). There is a perceived social acceptance of the use of social media as a tool for journalism, so much so it could be argued that the use of social media in journalism practice is deemed normal in the public eye. Due to this established normalised use of social media it has been suggested that there needs to be a reconceptualization of the characteristics that help define journalism (Singer 2006). Furthermore, the evaluation of journalism's implementation of social media is important to assess as it helps to make sense of how the public consumes news content.

Journalism is grounded in the following core competencies; non-partisanship, gatekeeping, transparency, and objectivity, which help distinguish journalists from other writers. The emphasis on normalisation stems from the extent to which social media has become ingrained in society. If it is a part of the general public's daily routine, then it is worth studying. The literature review will expand on this more, but it is worth noting that academics strongly argue that "professional journalists increasingly will be defined by the degree to which they choose to adhere to the normative goals of their professional culture," (Singer 2006: 13) suggesting that there is a progression of journalists acting outside traditional norms.. In this approach, in contrast to a pure McLuhanite view, audiences, followers, and academics should not accept the content at face value, rather content needs to come under criticism and analysis to ensure that the public is being well informed.

News values are considered more of an academic tool rather than a theory of news practice, but it is still a significant aspect of this research. Johan Galtung and Mari Holmboe Ruge's 1965 assessment of foreign news has opened up the study of news values and progressive research on news content. Additionally, news values also help to test how separated journalists are from wider social norms. News values have limitations in that they are a scholarly construction for interpreting the reasons why some news topics appear prevalent over others, despite the importance the story might hold within the public sphere (O'Neill and Harcup 2001). Nevertheless, understanding and interpreting priorities in the news can help provide insight into the news cycle, and they are particularly valuable in

allowing analysis of the implementation of new values, so that research does not remain fixed on outdated understandings of news content. By utilising news values as a method for coding content, it is easier to dig deeper into the news priorities in New Zealand online social spheres.

On Twitter

Twitter is the central platform for this research and can be defined as a microblogging social networking outlet that thrives on user generated content. Twitter works by providing a forum for users to disseminate content in 140 characters or less (called 'tweets') and includes web media mechanics such as hyperlinks, videos, images, mini expressive images called emojis, basic animated images know as GIFs (Graphics Interchange Format), and search capable hashtags. These mechanics deformalise public communication and challenge the structure of a message to fit a more compact means. Communication via Twitter is designed to be a one-to-many format but allows for replies or retweets which help assess connections with audiences or followers.

Summary

Social media are strong contenders for drivers of changes that may help or hinder traditional journalism processes. This research sets out to analyze a critical aspect of the relationship between social media and journalism, by looking at the trends or connotations that emerge from New Zealand news journalists' Twitter accounts and how this might

represent journalists' use of Twitter in general, alongside news organisations' presentation of news content and the insight that provides into the news cycle and process.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There is a multitude of theories, concepts, and studies surrounding the journalism industry, many of which seek to construct better boundaries and understanding of professional journalism. Although literature around journalism has a degree of stability and structure, these require reassessment due to the changes and development in communication technology and social media. As such, this first section will look at the construct of communications and some supporting theories, the second section will look at journalism, and the challenges that it faces, and the third section will look at journalists and social media. This literature review focuses particularly on those studies that inform the understanding of journalism in social media.

Section One

Journalism and Communication Theory

Within journalism, there are a few normative communications-based theories that help to explain journalism practice and processes. Communication-related theories are structured around the collective processes of the presentation and reception of information and are subject to varied analysis depending on the social structure the theory is applied or established in. Thus, there is no single ideology that defines journalism rather there is a combination of established values, ethics, routines and theories that contribute to the construction of the ideal journalist.

A few core theories have been argued that do help shape the understanding of communications, such as Medium Theory (McLuhan 1964), Normalisation Theory (Singer 2007), Gatekeeper Theory (Lewin 1943) and Media Dependency Theory (Ball-Rokeach and DeFleur 1976). Journalism takes its place in the public sphere as a form of distributing news content to mass audiences. Additionally, theories that have an application to social media are a progressive means for understanding the duty and perception of modern journalism. Therefore theories focusing on public and social impact are more significant for this research.

The first theory that has strong implications is McLuhan's medium theory, encapsulated in the phrase "the medium is the message" (1964). A phrase coined before social media, McLuhan argues that it not be the message that communicates the meaning, rather it is the medium through which the message is conveyed. As aforementioned, this theory helps suggest that the journalism industry's use of Twitter connotes more than the content itself. McLuhan uses multiple metaphors to explain his theory best, but his acknowledgement that: "we are as numb in our new electronic world as the native involved with our literate and mechanical culture" (1964: 207), helps illustrate the accompanied ignorance that can come with new means for communication. It can be argued that McLuhan's theory suggests that developed societies are not in control of communicative mediums and that the understanding of these mediums is inherited. In relation to this research if the medium is just as important as the content, then new medium platforms should require close analysis in terms of the role they play in altering content perception or

meaning. McLuhan is therefore useful in directing attention to the medium of Twitter more than to specific organisational practices.

The development of normative theories helps to respond to the challenges posed by the changes in communication. Consistently raised by Singer (2007), the normalisation of new media, presentation of news content, and communication highlights the lack of critical attention there is to the dissemination of news content and current journalism practices. Singer likes to build on social responsibility related theories, which seek to expand on the process and relationship between democracy, political infrastructure, social spheres and prescribed journalistic obligations. Singer does have a more modern approach to theories relating to journalism, as past communication theories were developed when social media was not as prevalent, and her literature does focus on journalists who blog and use social media (2006, 2007a, and 2007b). Normalisation theory highlights that the current process and applications of journalism ideas and actions have become normal in the public sphere. Singer argues that there is a consistent growth in the acceptance of current journalism practices, and this acceptance is normalising journalism processes in ways that may compromise core competencies of journalism, such as transparency, non-partisanship, accountability, and gatekeeping. Additionally, by establishing that the normalisation of journalists use of social media is changing professional journalism practices helps illustrate the importance of this research.

The gatekeeping theory was introduced by Lewin in 1943 and calls for assessment of what information is passed on and what the implications of these processes are for open

debate and public discourse. Lewin (1943) explains that information is a construct within mass media, not just journalism, and gatekeeping allows the control of the flow of information that is perceived to be in the best interests of society. With the introduction of the internet and new means for communication, it has been strongly argued that there is no gate around social media (Singer 2007b). The term gatekeeping is closely related to journalism and will become a contributing component in the analysis of this research. Furthermore, it could also be argued that the conscious valuing of the gatekeeping role of journalism allows for self-monitoring by journalists regarding that role. While it is acknowledged that journalists have been joined by many other gatekeepers and gate openers, important questions arise, within a normative framework, about the steps that journalists can take to ensure the practice remains a reputable and credible profession, as well as how to balance commercial needs and public obligations in the ways that information is controlled by journalistic gatekeepers on Twitter.

The opposite side of accepting modern journalism processes understands that there is some form of relationship between communication and audiences. Media dependency theory (Ball-Rokeach and DeFleur 1976) introduces the sociological aspect of audience's dependencies on mass communications. Ball-Rokeach and DeFleur propose "that it is the nature of the tripartite audience-media-society relationship which most directly determines many of the effects that the media have on people and society" (1976: 5). Media dependency theory helps to highlight the purpose of social media's impact on communication. The concept of a three-way relationship is a useful one for studying social media as social media exists within social structures, it is reliant on user-generated content

and instant gratification, and facilitates most forms of communication. Furthermore, the exposed nature of social media allows a more expressive relationship between audiences and media. The practice of communications provides social stability, and that there is a dependent relationship between media, audiences, and social systems. The purpose of highlighting media dependency theory is to address that there are other factors involved when researching social media and journalism, that is, audiences. While this research does not focus strongly on audiences, it is important to remember that they are a part of the process.

The Journalism Profession

Journalism is publicly defined by the *Oxford English Dictionary* as, “the activity or profession of writing for newspapers or magazines or of broadcasting news on radio or television” (Oxford 2014). This basic definition barely scratches the surface of what journalism instrumentally is in modern society. The more modern concept of journalism, and what journalism should be, has gone through an extensive transition due to external pressures on the practice (Tracy 2012, O’Sullivan and Heinonen 2008, Pihl-Thingvad 2014). Combined social, economic, political, and technological pressures on journalism have meant that journalists face more hardships and need to develop processes in which to ensure their professional position in society. As argued by Deuze (2005), the professional process of journalism is a distinct ideological development within Western culture. Additionally, Deuze (2005) argues that there may be longstanding elements of journalism underpinning the modern performance of journalist’s use of online mediums. Journalism is an exposed occupation, meaning that journalists are more open to social judgement and criticism.

Social conventions dictate that the basic responsibility of a journalist can be broadly encapsulated by the act of reporting and disseminating relevant news to the public to keep them informed. This act is what gives journalists their authoritative aura in the public sphere. However, there is a wide debate about how far the term 'professional' can be used to describe a journalist. Ahva's study of Finnish newspaper reporters help outlines that to uphold the title of 'professional,' journalists need to adhere to a set of communal values that are universal (2012). This lack of universal values among journalists has led to many debates surrounding the occupation, and its contribution to society. Ahva discusses public journalism as a term to describe a subset of professional journalism where the rules change due to social needs. Public journalism "aims to foster participation, public deliberation diversity and connectedness" (Ahva 2012: 793), which links in seamlessly with the ideals and values attached to democracy. It is this awareness of knowing what is important for society that drove journalism to claim its professional standard. It is, therefore, important in this study not to conflate the commercial and public-good aspects of journalism practice, but to see them as relatively distinct.

Section Two

Journalism and The News Process

Journalism is the occupational process which helps direct and delivers news in the public sphere. However, before the news can be distributed, journalists must ensure that the news content is worthy and relevant. *The Elements of Journalism* by Kovach and

Rosenstiel (2001) has been perceived as an unofficial bible for identifying the essential principles and practices of journalism in the United States. Threats towards journalists' ability to act out ideas such as Kovach and Rosenstiel's *Elements of Journalism* have become apparent due to the viral nature of social media. One element that can both be the root of journalism and harder to attain in a social media age is "journalism's first obligation is to the truth" (Kovach and Rosenstiel 2001). Interactional social media is threatening this element is that it provides a platform for instant verification, judgment, and accountability. Audiences, through social media, have the capacity to challenge and sometimes correct journalists at fault and verify the content of their news and sources. This may lead to a decline in trust and deter audiences, making them shift to alternate public places and sources.

The News Structure

The news is a form of communication, constructed from specific information about certain events and societies. However, the term 'news' is a very broad definition and can become subject to interpretation based on the context it is used in. In relation to journalism, the news has been defined as an authoritative based product that places importance on the dissemination of information that is in the best interest of society (Kovach and Rosenstiel 2001, Albaek 2011, and Ferrucci 2014). This claim that news should be in the public's best interest is derived from the role news organisations have carved out resulting in conventional reliance society has on journalists to be the public's eyes and ears when it comes to ascertaining information truthfully and fairly (Jacquette 2010). In democratically based societies, a high relationship of trust has traditionally been assumed, whereby audiences are invited to read the news being presented to them by trained journalists as an

accurate depiction of external events, thereby differentiating their practices as a truth-telling (Jacquette 2010). By remaining as truthful as possible to the processes of news reporting, journalists take on a role as guardians of public debate.

News Values

Famously instigated by Galtung and Ruge (1965), news values have become a useful analytical tool for academics to analyse and study journalism practices and their occupational processes. Despite the length of time since Galtung and Ruge developed them, they are generally accepted as valid tools for evaluating news processes and values. Galtung and Ruge were interested in how events become news and what indicators shaped the news media's perception. Within this, they understood that they could not account for everything, and gave their attention to the news articles that spiked their interest surrounding the reporting of events in foreign newspapers. This study was revisited by Harcup and O'Neill (2001 and 2016), who showed that there are new aspects present in news journalism and updated news values to incorporate changes. News values can illuminate the decision-making of journalists, and provide a foundation for justifying the reporting methods on specific events. Furthermore, Harcup and O'Neill invite academics to partake in studies involving news values to compile new ideas about the news environment. This study is a response to that invitation.

The Quality of News

The quality of news is difficult to measure. There is no single set of instructions or guides on how to report the news and there are varied opinions on what makes quality news and how to measure it (Anderson 2014, and Shapiro 2009). One tool to measure the quality of news content lies in the elements of traditional news reporting. Elements of traditional reporting help to establish the expectation and treatment of news content and are still anticipated regarding social media. A news story is “supposed to outline the different perspectives involved - by explaining the background, interpreting the significance and assessing the possible future consequences of what has happened” (Albaek 2011: 336). However, social media serves as a problematic aspect of the news cycle process and compromises elements of traditional reporting. The immediate nature of social media and the capacity to access alternative perspectives simultaneously prevents clean and concise communication of news events. Therefore, the employment of traditional elements of reporting allows journalists to exercise their profession and maintain a degree of quality within news content production.

Priorities and Relations

The key to this research is finding and understanding priorities of news journalism. As Lee notes, “the media provide effective guidance as to which events are worthy of getting attention” (2009: 175). While social media sites have the vast reach, it is the journalist who has the authority and the ability to confirm what news, events, and agendas should take prominence in society. However, there is significance in “direct personal experience and social interaction” that result in the mass news media losing their authority

in terms of directing the news (Lee 2009: 178). This is where competition between journalism and social media emerges; where journalism has the (waning) authority, social media has the attention.

As a significant force in the public sphere, journalism serves a purpose of holding the elites of society accountable. Therefore, there is a strong relationship between politics and journalism. McNair argues that politics “is an essential element of journalism’s contribution to the democratic process, and one which becomes more important as the quantity of information in circulation, and the speed of its flow, increases” (2000: 207). It is the consistencies in a journalistic routine that assist in maintaining political status quo in a democratic environment. Academic literature around the symbiotic relationship between political infrastructure and journalism can be credited to assisting the development of gatekeeping roles, objectivity, and other journalistic practices (Macnamara 2012, and Tully 2008). Establishing the importance of politically related reporting helps to assess the status quo of reporting. The traditional and professional manner in which journalist’s approach and reflect political news topics should be representative of the treatment of all news topics. Furthermore, this helps to establish the expectation the public have of journalists reporting regardless of the medium.

Objectivity is a primary aspect of journalism and is built on the premise of the removal of bias from content. The pursuit of objectivity “remains one of the more salient features of journalism’s professional character” (Lasorsa et al. 2011: 23). Schudson looks at the history and development of objectivity in the United States of America and has said that

the use of objectivity is linked to democratic processes as it encourages freedom of communication while restraining any sensational or bias content (2001). Objectivity allows the public sphere to develop trust and reliability on journalists, and develop a normalisation in sourcing information from journalists.

New Zealand Journalists

New Zealand is a small and tightly networked country where it is a neatly packaged environment for journalism based studies. Lealand and Hollings have argued that the New Zealand media environment is extremely stable, with “high levels of overseas ownership” (2012: 127). However, a more recent report by Merja Myllylahti in 2015 helped to highlight the growing instability of media ownership in New Zealand and the lack of investment by overseas owners. Remarkably, there is limited evidence to suggest that external ownership has impacted on journalistic routines in relation to New Zealand society. Lealand and Hollings argue that New Zealand journalists continue to aim to produce the news in a way that will benefit and interest wider New Zealand society. New Zealand journalists strongly value “the watchdog role of the press, that the news media should provide analyses of important issues, but also think that the media should report without embellishments” (Lealand and Hollings 2012: 133). This clear mindset that New Zealand journalists hold translates into their willingness to adapt and remain true to the ‘profession’ of journalism despite the challenges presented by external means such as new technologies.

Journalism's Role in Society

From Tin Tin to Ron Burgundy, the image of the journalist has come in varying shapes and forms. Soloski (1989) touches on the personas, characters, and roles within the professional realm of journalism. The development of the “crusading reporter” is embedded in the culture of journalism, and historically marks “bitter struggles by competing occupants to secure a monopoly in the professional marketplace” (Soloski 1989: 210). This highlights that journalism is more than an occupation; it is a constant engagement to remain one step ahead in the marketplace. Complementary to this, Ferrucci (2014) argues that journalism is more market driven now than ever. With the increased pressure of the marketplace, cracks within the realm of journalism begin to show with shifts in ethics, means of reporting and forms of communications. Prior studies found that journalism consists of four specific elements and goals: “creating an open dialogue and line of communication with the public, allowing the public the ability to help set the news agenda, making journalism more accessible and easier to understand, and using the news to galvanise and not frustrate the public” (Ferrucci 2014, Nip 2008). These elements help to understand journalism as a ‘profession’ but not as a practice, and that it is a respected role in society. Furthermore, it allows the development to consistently perceive journalism as a reliable source despite changes in communications technologies.

An all-encompassing characteristic that journalism holds onto is that no matter what technological or sociological changes occur, objectivity is the most desired attribute (Post 2014). Objectivity is what sets journalism and journalists apart from bloggers and story writers. It is the ability to perform objectively which allows journalists to instigate trust and

accuracy within their reporting processes. However, social media and its impact on journalism have raised the question of whether a change is required in terms of developing new textual practices. Post's survey showed that journalists themselves are not entirely convinced that objectivity is attainable when reporting (ibid: 7). Objectivity is still an ideal aspect of the practising journalist but has come under increased pressure. The ideas around objective reporting does not sit well with social media, as users of social networking sites are socially orientated and not considered neutral or instigators of objective reporting.

Current Issues Facing the Professional Field of Journalism

Journalism is "currently in a state of flux, as it is undergoing rapid and dramatic structural changes, affecting it as a practice and as a profession." (Spyridou et al. 2013:77). As mentioned earlier, the internet and new networking capabilities have posed various challenges for journalism, forcing it to adjust accordingly to ensure that the needs of society are met. Spyridou et al. did highlight positive outcomes due to these changes, one of which is the culture around engagement and participation. Where citizen journalism has become a challenge for journalism, it also means there is increased engagement and participation from consumers which does help ensure that the news is still relevant in society (Spyridou et al. 2013). However, closing this gap between journalism and consumers has meant that journalists now must be more open to criticisms and personal attacks, as they are held directly accountable for the news.

There remains broad agreement about the role and challenges of being a journalist but the practice is also fluid and varied (Harcup 2011, Post 2014). There is no diminishing journalism and its role in society as it is still deemed as useful, but the views of those studying to participate in the world of journalism now have a different interpretation of what journalism is and its value in society (Hanna and Sanders 2012). Hanna and Sanders highlight that the education of future journalists shifted the preconceptions of particular roles that they should execute in society; in particular, there was decreased support in terms of “concentrate on the news which is of interest to the widest possible audience” (2012). This decrease would suggest that instead of catering to society, journalists now should consider different demographics when it comes to framing their reports. Additionally, having the perception of how individuals are becoming journalists helps to understand the environment which fosters their profession, and address the how and why of their reporting.

Challenges in The Journalism Industry: Social Media

Journalism has developed a history of melding and adapting to changes where needed. As highlighted by Allan (2010), the following are issues that arise and demand attention when investigating challenges in journalism: Technology, profitability, journalistic form, consumption, and interactivity. These challenges are indicative of social change which demonstrates how intertwined journalism is with society and the importance of the role of the journalist within the public sphere. However, adapting to these changes has led to the accusation that journalism has developed a preference for grim headlines and dramatically based stories (Allan 2010). It could be argued that this preference is for the greater benefit

of society, or it could be a market tactic to combat the emergence of entities such as social media that take away the attention journalists once dominantly owned. However, it is analysed, there is evidence that news values are evolving at the same time as social media is becoming more important as a delivery mechanism for news and a place for public debate.

The literature has noted that there is evidence of social media being used as a promotional tool or for personal branding, stressing that there is an amalgamation of professional and personal on social media networks (Veenstra et al. 2014). The convergence of personal and professional network has resulted in motivation to pursue Twitter as a topic for research. Veenstra et al. (2014) observed journalists on Twitter during a period where a protest was taking place and discussed that the content produced by journalists was both informationally and expressively motivated. The evidence of personal branding and breaking down the professional barrier of journalism helps to show journalists' interaction and freedom on social media.

Section Three

New Technologies and New Networks

The introduction of new technologies and perhaps most importantly the internet has produced pros and cons for the newsroom. The use of the Internet "can bring journalists into closer contact with those outside the confines of the news organisation, whether the audience, the public at large, or the emerging and perhaps critical or competing practitioners of citizen journalism" (O'Sullivan and Heinonen 2008). While immediate and

instant contact with resources and sources is a blessing, this can also turn against journalists as new technologies produce a by-product of shorter life spans of news stories. Other issues raised by the introduction of new technologies and networks include the ability for audiences to float between official and non-official sources, organisations having direct communication in the public sphere, a wider range of sources and perspectives, and social networks capacity to produce online communities. Journalists now must act faster and anticipate what is needed when reporting the news and tend to compromise the quality of reporting to break a story first (Boczkowski 2009).

There is a myriad of different social networking sites, each with their purpose and following. One dominant social network is that of Facebook, currently with an estimated 1.9 million daily users in New Zealand (stoppress.co.nz accessed December 2016), is presently the dominant social networking platform within New Zealand. However, in terms of studying social media, a fair portion of researchers opt for Twitter due to its consistent chronological presentation of and full accessibility to user generated content (Molyneux 2014, Hermida 2010, Veenstra et al. 2014). There may be restrictions by only focusing on one social networking site, but as Rains and Brunner touch on, by focusing on one site it is more likely that the study will give a narrow but clearer understanding of the research topic (2014). Due to the fast-paced nature of social networking sites, it does make sense to focus on one dominant site and analyse its relations (with journalism) on a case by case basis. Additionally, limiting the variables of a methodology makes a study easier to replicate and compare.

Facebook would be the ideal candidate to analyse in New Zealand, but there is the issue of tailored news feeds. Facebook's marketing and construction mean that individual users each have a different news feed, making it hard to study coherently. As previously expressed, central to the study of journalism and social media has been the social network of Twitter. Furthermore, Twitter is more focused on the interests of the users, rather than the user's social life; this is to say that users are more inclined to tweet and reference their interests and stray away from the more intimate content. Audiences, users, or followers are an integral construct of using social media. The component of audiences needs to be acknowledged to some degree within social media and journalism-related studies because users cannot be assumed as passive audiences. Addressing the online public sphere is important as it helps to understand meaningful engagement and establish trends that may help to explain the relations between audiences and changes to the news cycle processes. Audiences, users, and followers are engaged and expressive enough to have an influence on the news gathering processes (Xu and Feng 2014: 432). This suggests there needs to be an awareness of social media and the interactions and intentions of all users.

The Social Sharing Pressure and Journalistic Norms

Sharing, liking, or retweeting are considered key and progressive aspects of social media, and add to the new means of communication and disseminating content. The shareable nature present in social media does produce obstacles for journalism in terms of instantaneous content, pre-established formats (such as character counts and limits), alternative sources, and tailored news feeds. The reshaping of communication has meant that users of social media have the ability to produce content regardless of their standing in

society. This has meant it can be difficult to study social media consistently and clearly, as “the growth of user-generated content on the web is significantly altering the parameters of journalists” (Vobic and Milojevic 2014:1025). Social media based challenges push journalists and the boundaries of journalism practices. Journalism must adapt to external obstacles and incorporate them in news practice, and a number of researchers have therefore focused on the quality of news as practices change. As Vobic and Milojevic study highlights, there is the issue of wider social meanings and cultural constitutions that practising journalists must take into consideration when dealing with ‘breaking news’ and ‘viral news’ that occurs outside an authoritative source or reliable institution (2014). The key point here is to address that journalism has a type of competition, and that there need to be developments in the journalism industry to be able to best compete against elements such as user generated content or alternatively packaged content.

The traditional esteem of journalism is at a crossroads. Investigations into the relationship between the social media-public-journalism triangle have highlighted a need for change (Lasorsa et al. 2012 and Veenstra et al. 2014). Schudson suggests that journalism is an occupational culture and is designed to be transparent and mould to the changes that society presents (2001). Additionally, it could be argued that due to the nature of social media, journalists need to start implementing new norms and routines to best adapt and present news content. Additionally, links have been made between the importance of transparency and user participation (Deuze 2005, Karlsson 2011). Deuze mentions how transparency incorporates the opportunity for the public to “monitor, check, criticise and even intervene in the journalistic process” (2005: 455). The incorporation of the public in

the news cycle expresses that there is more opportunity for surveillance over news content, and overall helps facilitate public debate.

Social media platforms are aiding journalists in terms of the news creation process. Journalists on social networking platforms “provide insight into how stories are crafted, offer personal takes on news events, and provide context for the development of news coverage” (Lasorsa et al. 2012: 23). This development of transparency in relation to news gathering and creation on social networking sites helps emit a sense of trust to social network users, allowing journalists to uphold core values in journalism. As covered by Singer in various articles, transparency is an emerging construct of journalism on social media, and is proving to be a reliable variable in journalism studies and is present in the normative processes of journalism (2007a, 2007b, and 2006). The ability to recognise and apply transparency could help address inconsistencies in online reporting, and better develop means or guides for curating news content.

The literature has also highlighted the importance of gatekeeping as an evident component of journalists’ activity online. Xu and Feng argue that gatekeeping is closely related to the network between journalism and politics, and address the characteristics of gatekeeping on Twitter (2014). As previously mentioned, gatekeeping theory defines itself as the process of moderating for what kinds of information or content gets disseminated to the masses. However, in relation to social media, developments have meant that “gatekeeping consists of not only selecting but also shaping and even manipulating information” (Xu and Feng 2014: 421). Social media is adding additional ‘gates’ and access

points for the public to obtain information, and as Xu and Feng discuss, people from an array of political backgrounds contribute to the online discussion, illustrating the extent to which old restrictions over the dissemination of information are weakening (2014).

Emergence of The Citizen Journalist, User Generated Content, and Content Relationships

The combination of the internet, social media and the changing status of journalism have allowed a new form of journalism to emerge, citizen journalism, which poses a further challenge for journalism. There are multiple ways to define citizen journalism but it is primarily seen “as a range of amateur information reporting and sharing activities” (Carr et al. 2014). Citizen journalism has developed into an independent role regarding reporting on events that are seen as highly newsworthy, sometimes due to the extremities of the event (such as disaster or events in remote locations). Those who participate in citizen journalism provide more diversity in the media, but due to the lack of the ethics and routine developed by practising journalists, their reports are sometimes criticised for being more biased, unformatted and inconclusive (Carr et al. 2014 and Blaagaard 2013). As mentioned, citizen journalism provides a platform from which journalists can gather sources, information, images and video clips in more remote locations, but it also means that societies are able to consume news media that has not been created by a practising journalist who has professional training to package the news.

Citizen journalism is a by-product of the emergence of new technologies. Tracy argues that the emergence of new technologies means that those who have access to them,

hold various journalistic properties (2012), but that “the news that citizen journalists choose to share is intrinsically different from the news professional journalists have been trained to report” (Tracy 2012: 91). An interesting feature of citizen journalism is the role they play in post news processes in terms of updating, contributing and reflecting on news stories; their contribution does add more legitimacy to news stories (Tracy 2012, and Noguera Vivo 2013). This validation from citizen journalism takes away the immediacy from journalists, but it can become problematic in terms of disseminating news content which may skew the initial news story.

Citizen journalism is a form of user generated content and therefore directs analysis towards understanding the networks in which users participate, particularly the way in which content is perceived and interpreted. Noguera Vivo highlights that “each message has no value without the context of the rest of the tweets and, therefore, the reactions created must be seen as a whole” (2013: 99). This is an important concept when establishing the methodology and data collection process. Tweets work as a collection, and while some individual examples can be used to help explain the meaning behind the content, the overall picture of Twitter feeds best helps to demonstrate journalists use of Twitter. It can be argued that it is the collaboration of various content that allows social media to be utilised as an information source, and can become a metaphorical Pandora’s box as content can be innocently perceived at face value, but the intentions behind it can be convoluted when it is not guided by professional journalistic norms. As discussed by Noguera Vivo, social media networks present journalists with a new set of rules and routines that impact on traditional values and processing the quantities of user generated content is fast becoming an aspect of

using social media as a source (2013). There is now a displacement of information. Where journalists used to be the ones to package and disseminate news, it is now becoming a fragmented process where information can arise from anyone, anywhere and at any time.

Rounds and routines are an inbuilt construct of being a journalist. Journalists are commonly assigned specific areas of society to investigate, report, follow-up, review, commentate or provide opinions on. English's study depicted that the motivation for sports journalists to use Twitter included "to follow sources, to promote content or interact with readers, and because of office structures or directives" (2014: 14). Sports journalists on Twitter provide a clearer picture of utilising Twitter as a part of their routine. Sports reporting is composed under alternate conditions, unlike other news stories. Sports are followed and watched by thousands of people, so it is easier for a sports journalist to be held accountable, and for them to be transparent (English 2014). The same cannot be said for other events when the truth could potentially become fabricated.

English's (2014) study on how Twitter has been accepted or rejected as sports journalism is a rare analysis of these issues, which helps highlight the minimal studies there are on social media and journalism. Additionally, there appears to be a naivety and unsureness about how to approach studies involving social media. In terms of sports journalism (and potentially other forms of journalism), one key advantage of using Twitter is real time posting and interaction (English 2014). The ability to have breaking news, alongside varying accounts and viewpoints allows journalists to collect information and disseminate content at a more rapid pace. By addressing how breaking or shared news

implicates the use of sources on social media, helps to demonstrate the impact social media has on traditional news elements.

With studies seeking to build an understanding of social media and the news, it is important to acknowledge the relationship between traditional and modern means of presenting news content. In terms of using social media as a reference or news source, journalists tend to use official sources on important social matters (Paulussen and Harder 2014). However, a much wider range of sources is drawn on in reporting general social issues. The referencing of social media in the newspaper is more commonplace when referring to “ordinary citizens, celebrities and sports people” (Paulussen and Harder 2014: 549). This differential use of social media suggests that these journalists are still maintaining professional norms when it comes to matters of importance, such as elections, crisis and raising public awareness. The present study asks similar questions in the New Zealand context.

Microblogging

As of February 2016, Twitter has 320 million monthly active users, 500 million tweets sent per day, and 80% of users on mobile devices (Twitter.com 2016). As of May 2014, in New Zealand alone there were approximately 370,000 users on Twitter. However, this statistic is a bit dated so it might be higher (traverse.net.nz 2015). The growing quantity of users and participation on Twitter, although relatively small in comparison to Facebook as noted above, is evidence that it is a rich resource to use when studying communications.

Twitter is a more open forum and is more encouraging in terms of engagement. Twitter's open platform allows an unrestricted access between users and for journalism, this means a more direct unlimited access to the public. Although users can tailor their Twitter feed, it does not constrict who can see what content like Facebook does. Twitter displays content in chronological order but can boost sponsored posts or popular posts, meaning that previous posts are easy to locate.

Twitter is the most significant microblogging platform to study in relation to journalism. When studying microblogging, it is important to understand the implementations, customs, and grammatical structure that surround it. For example, Twitter utilises hashtags to assist in its search function, time-saving and a beneficial feature that allows users to follow a trending topic more concisely. As outlined in Lasorsa et al.'s (2012) study, Twitter has become a staple for studies referencing social media and journalism as it has created a platform where it is clear who is communicating, tweeting, retweeting and the reactions that follow. Twitter's structure has resulted in it becoming prominent social media platform, resulting in unlimited access and seamless global membership.

However, its use within journalism must also be understood as an extension of journalism. Hermida states, "when Twitter is discussed in the mainstream media, it is framed within the context of established journalism norms and values" (2010:299). This is a key element to this research; by understanding how social media is used and interpreted by

journalists, we gain a better understanding of the relationship between journalism and social media, and what the future of our news consumption might become.

Social media has initiated new forms of para-journalism such as micro-blogging. Unlike a normal blog site, micro-blogging is a broadcasting form of blogging which utilises social media sites, where short, sharp messages are published knowing that they will be read by a large audience (Hermida 2010). Hermida sees microblogging as an “awareness system” that provides journalists with a more “complex way of understanding and reporting on the subtleties of public communication” (2010: 300 - 301). The term “awareness system” has been widely accepted in studies around journalism as it provides a sense of justification when it comes to using social media within the daily routine of journalists. Hermida’s “awareness system” presents the idea that “value is defined less by each individual fragment of information that may be insignificant on its own or of limited validity, but rather by the combined effect of communication” (2010: 301). In short, individual posts (tweets) become meaningless, but in the context of a collection of posts (tweets), prominence and value are added. Twitter is more focused on individual interests rather than friends (Brautovic et al. 2013: 22). Twitter allows users a direct and instant contact with other users who may have the same interests or follow the same trend.

The literature touches on how important it is to recognise social media as an emerging component of journalism. Furthermore, the development of the normalisation of Twitter in occupational duties is emerging, and the intricacies of the internet and communicative means are becoming common place within the public sphere. Lasorsa et al.’s study

addresses the journalism practices, and the use of Twitter demonstrate the 'normalising' of communication in the public sphere by journalists (2012). By normalising the practice of using Twitter or as a rooted aspect of a journalist's or the general public's daily routine, it is then fair to argue that utilising social media as a way of disseminating content is both strategic and resourceful within the news cycle. Lasorsa et al. mention that "journalists on social media networking platforms provide insight into how stories are crafted, offer personal takes on news events, and provide context for the development of news coverage" (2012: 23). In the process of normalising Twitter as a part of the news cycle routine, the consequences have been that there is less of a filtering system on social media, resulting in a freedom of usage on the journalist's behalf. It can be argued that the normalisation of Twitter allows journalism to be perceived less of an institution and more as a social practice embedded in the wider social phenomenon, providing the public with a more unobstructed view of the news gathering and disseminating processes.

Twitter is not an exclusive means of communication in developed societies, as it is easily accessible via mobile applications and internet services. Brautovic et al.'s (2013) study examined the use of Twitter between elite and non-elite media sources and demonstrates that journalists are using Twitter as a means for mixed content dissemination. There is a distinct difference between elite and non-elite media sources based on the types of content; this helps to build research samples in order to prevent saturation of a single type of news content. Elite journalists focused more on sports, political and on the job content, compared to non-elite journalists who focused more on personal life, entertainment, and self-promotion (Brautovic et al. 2013). The segregation between elite and non-elite journalists

helps demonstrate that even in the same news environment, the content permitted on journalists' individual Twitter feeds is not necessarily universal. Additionally, Brautovic et al. are concluded that journalist's non-partisanship became compromised, illustrating the difficulty in maintaining a separation between the personal and professional use of Twitter (2013). The less strict rules around journalists in terms of the kind of content that they disseminate results in Twitter becoming a useful vehicle for assessing modern day journalism.

Journalists are loosely governed on their social media pages. While they may be requested to comply with specific outlines, embargos, or contractual obligations, studies often find no immediate gatekeeping from within the news institution restricting or guiding the content. Barnard's (2014) digital ethnographic study and content analysis of newsroom tweeting and social media use concluded that journalists attempt traditional news norms and that there is a noticeable shift in the habits of journalists who utilise new network capabilities (2014). Barnard is suggesting that despite new networks and means of communications, journalists are still endeavouring to maintain traditional news norms (2014). Furthermore, this helps to stress the importance of news content analysis to help ascertain evidence of the presence of traditional norms and values. Journalists need to keep their opinions and personal lives separate from their profession, but this separation of professional and personal is more difficult when it comes to social media.

Studying Social Networks

The recent development of social media has had a bit of a snowball effect, as it has rapidly grown in popularity and use, with unpredictable outcomes. Poell and Borra illustrate the perception that social media is a platform for 'alternate journalism' (2011). Their research included analysing multiple posts on the G20 protests on Twitter, Youtube and Flickr; which showed that social networking platforms can provide an alternate perspective on a specific issue, but can be drowned out by the saturation of users and should not be considered as a valid source for obtaining information (Poell and Borra 2011). Broadly speaking, it is difficult to define parameters in which to study social networking sites, as their ability to alter content diminishes the ability to research social networking sites consistently and accurately. Skogerbo and Krumsvik highlight that "social media should be studied within the context of spatial and temporal boundaries" (2014: 4). Social media need to be treated as a multifaceted and constantly changing platform, where there is a diverse range of factors to consider when approaching it from an academic point of view. Skogerbo and Krumsvik help outline social media as an open and accessible platform where users are more transparent and diverse in relation to content.

Social media networking sites are about building connections and broadening a user's audience reach. Xu and Feng examine the direct conversations on Twitter becoming a potential venue to building relationships with journalists (2014). The issue of influence is a mildly prominent factor between journalism and social media, and can very much become a 'chicken versus egg' scenario. Journalists can seek out information and post (tweet) questions and users (followers) can reflect this. "The number of followers is a criterion for

selection because a large number of followers indicates that the journalists are potentially active and influential on Twitter.” (Xu and Feng 2014: 425). It is implied that a journalists' larger following on Twitter may add to their authority, or alternatively, a larger following could be the by-product of popularity.

Summary

To summarise, research involving social media is recent and growing in popularity. Thus there is no defined or correct way to study; rather there are suggestions and experiments to be made when developing an understanding of communications on social media. Key studies have focused on the traditional act and concepts of journalism and on the development of the journalism profession (Singer 2007, Ahva 2012, and Xu and Feng 2014). In the development of this research, it is reassuring to note that communications related theories are still applicable, despite the shift in content mediums. McLuhan's discussion around the “medium is the message” highlights the importance of journalism related studies as it is the medium of which journalists are using that has changed.

The literature that utilises the analysis of social media and journalism relations demonstrate a credible way to ascertain the impact of social media on communications. Strong arguments developed by Lasorsa et al. (2012), Brautovic et al. (2013), and Molyneux (2014), have demonstrated that collecting journalists or news organisations tweets is the most direct means for data collection and analysis. Additionally, by focusing on one element

of communication allows the research a clear perspective rather than too diffuse a view of the content.

METHODOLOGY

The best approaches for studying journalists on Twitter have revolved around data mining processes, followed up with a combination of qualitative or quantitative analysis. To best address the research questions the methodology implemented in this study seeks to collect data from Twitter, code the data to help quantitatively address statistical significance, and qualitatively assess via content analysis to address the observable characteristics. The research questions are informed by the idea that journalistic norms and routines are constantly changing to account for the diversification of modern communication. While previous research has focused on the professional obligations of journalism, this study seeks to look at and gain an understanding of journalist's overall use of social media as a communicative tool. The purpose of this research is to create a platform to push and develop more questions about the professional nature of journalism considering social media, and to analytically look at the content produced by journalists on social media, and how this might impact on news production.

The central question for this research is what content do New Zealand news journalists produce on Twitter? This research will explore trends and patterns, and look at all content posted on Twitter within a two-week time frame to gauge an understanding of the types of discourse New Zealand journalists are disseminating on Twitter. Subsequently, this research will also look at how much of the content is news or news related, and what are the dominant features of the tweeted content.

Past Methodology

The method for this research builds on previous studies involving journalists and Twitter. Much of the previous research on journalists' use of Twitter has revolved around a qualitative content analysis of journalists and tweets, and primarily looked at the impact of Twitter on journalistic norms and practices. Lasorsa et al. (2012) have become a flagship study where their content analysis of journalists and their tweets helped illustrate how Twitter impacts on a journalist's roles, specifically partisanship and gatekeeping. The sample of journalists used was obtained using a database called *Muck Rack* – a site that lists and outlines America journalists plus their affiliations. The sample included 430 journalists and coded over 20,000 tweets (though no retweets or comments) throughout a two-week period (Lasorsa et al. 2012). For logistical reasons and to prevent over saturation of one journalist or company only the first ten tweets from each journalist were recorded. A critical point raised by Lasorsa et al. was that “a random sample would have been ideal but the population being unknown that was impossible” (2012: 25). This research paper seeks to replicate aspects of Lasorsa et al.'s 2012 methodology as it exemplifies the best process for looking at content on Twitter.

Molyneux (2015) and Hedman (2016) raised some ongoing issues with studies involving social media. Twitter allows journalists a sense of autonomy, which means their actions on social media can run independently from their employer. Autonomy on social media results in a blurring of context, meaning that the intentions behind a post or tweet are never certain (Molyneux 2015). As research in this area grows, it becomes more apparent that there is a degree of difficulty to obtain accurate results. Hedman (2016)

clearly illustrates the difficulties in researching journalists on Twitter and constructing sample groups for analysis. There is a lot of manual collecting and coding when it comes to Twitter (Hadman 2016) therefore, it takes an immense amount of time to create a study and collect data.

As aforementioned, news and news values are a primary aspect of this research. However, questions asking 'How is this news?' requires a larger and fixed sample size. Also, aspects such as audience, audience participations, the journalist's personal perspective, and the news organisation's regulations would need to be considered (Hermida 2010 and Barnard 2014). Previous studies focus on journalistic norms and routines, for example, gatekeeping as it is an integral aspect of the professional workings of a journalist, as well as partisanship and transparency (Molyneux 2015, Brautovic et al. 2013, Barnard 2014, and Hermida 2010). These studies help assess the professional environment of journalism and seek to build more consistent journalism practices with social media. This research will look at how journalists are using social media as a communicative tool (Molyneux 2015) rather than a platform for measuring professional values (Lasorsa et al. 2012). The literature does acknowledge that professional values are important to journalism research (Ahva 2012). However, this study will focus on the communicated content on Twitter. Journalists' content on Twitter demonstrates a sense of priority and can be representative of meaningful content. As Twitter is an 'interest' social media platform rather than a network, there is more importance placed on content and distribution (Brautovic et al. 2013). Thus, this study aims to look at, analyse, prioritise and categorise content posted on Twitter by journalists to see what kinds of news content is posted/tweeted. Thus, it should provide an indication of

what types of content are deemed important by journalists, and why this tweeted content is news.

Twitter-based studies do have disadvantages. Microblogging spheres allow for quick means to access and disseminate content; however, as fast as the content can be expressed, it can be removed or edited. As outlined by Hermida, social media and its ability to disseminate information to a large portion of the public sphere has made it the ideal vehicle for journalists to use in distributing news content (2010). The literature does fail to mention the ability for users to edit or delete content, which can hinder results when gathering data. The suggestion of edited content could alter the analysis, observation, or interpretation of the content. As such, the results of the research have the potential to become isolated to a specific situation and time stamp, rather than being available for repeat analysis. Therefore, being aware that content alteration can provide various presentations and interpretations are important for future research.

Utilising content analysis or textual analysis, collectively or independently, can help illustrate observational trends within the research. A fair few prominent studies that centralise around social media and journalism embody content analysis as a primary methodology, due to the ability of content to be more freely interpreted (Lasorsa et al. 2012, Molyneux 2014, Brautovic et al. 2013). Content analysis can also be melded with statistical analysis for figurative representation to help reinforce hypothesis. Lasorsa et al.'s study on *Normalising Twitter* demonstrates the use of content analysis to illustrate journalists' use of Twitter and how micro-blogging can impact on journalistic values such as

objectivity (2012). By formulating a format or guide for collecting content from Twitter, Lasorsa et al. (2012) are beginning to become a flagship study. Where possible, the textual analysis should be introduced to help assess the language used by journalists on social media, as this will help illustrate a dissolving or upholding of news media writing. Although sparsely mentioned in the literature, textual analysis can also help indicate social communicative values. Also, it will provide insight into the types of stories and framing of content, and how this is perceived and represented on social media.

Combined with content analysis, tailoring the research and being aware of the journalist's environment is a successful component of past research. Brautovic et al. used content analysis to examine tweets to understand better in what way Croatian journalists used Twitter. This clear-cut method demonstrated journalists use of Twitter helped them to maintain their accountability and transparency (2013: 34). By being aware that Croatian journalists do not frequently use Twitter; Brautovic et al.'s study help to stress the importance that journalism is a universal concept but not universally governed or executed. The location of the research is paramount in helping to shape future research as a New Zealand journalist may not be in the same bounds or social constructs as an American journalist.

The location of the study does help to tailor the methodology and does present limitations in terms of relatability and replication or the research process. The importance of highlighting Brautovic et al.'s (2013) study is that this study was conducted in Croatia over a longer time span, and highlighted a few issues with studying Twitter in a country that does

not have a strong Twitter user base (similar to that of New Zealand). It could be argued that social media-related studies in countries that do not appear to utilise social media networks require more attention to detail and specific research guidelines to make the methodology and results more concise. Social media is very much an open book and condensing the focus of the study appears to be key in a successful analysis.

Content Analysis

As the term suggests, content analysis is the process of coding, analysing, and interpreting content from any given text or image-based resource. Conducting a content analysis involves a few crucial components: content to be analysed, a sample size that will provide valid results, and a coding scheme. As described by Hesieh and Shannon “research using qualitative content analysis focuses on the characteristics of language as communication with attention on the content or the contextual meaning of the text” (2011: 1278). Some uses of content analysis seek to use the evidence to interpret the context of the communication, extending beyond the denotative meaning of the content.

Twitter is a sporadic social media communications network which means that users are under no routine or obligation to post, tweet, or share content. In terms of news content, audiences can expect the news to be on at 6 o’clock, but they cannot predict the content or timing of the tweet. This lack of routine is an ideal example of manifest content as it adheres to no pattern or trend. Due to the sporadic nature of Twitter, and its unusual characteristic that it disseminates vast amounts of content, it becomes an excellent example

of manifest content. Coined by Berelson in the 1950's, manifest content refers to text or image based content that is tangible and observable, establishing a means for measuring a concept based on its semiotics to a definitive representation. For example, it would be difficult to measure patriotism, but it would be possible and feasible to measure the occurrence of national icons (such as the national flag). By using the criterion of manifest content, there is a methodological basis for measuring the observable content on Twitter (text, images, and videos) which provides the foundations for analysing the content. In reference to this study and the research question, the goal is to use analysis of content to ascertain how the text, images, and videos represent journalists in their profession, and how the news is represented or portrayed. Here is where news values can be introduced to help analyse and categorise the content. By determining the news values present in the Twitter text, it is possible to analyse the extent to which journalists orient towards established norms of news and how far they are producing a different kind of news discourse or engaging in kinds of discourse that do not fit conventions of news.

Methodology Overview

This study takes place over a two-week time frame (3rd April 2016 – 16th April 2016) and documents the tweets from 32 New Zealand journalists from various disciplines, and six news media outlets. This study involves two sampling groups: A representative sample divided into three subgroups of New Zealand journalists, and a purposive sample of New Zealand news organisations. The journalists from the representative sample were selected by manually combing through Twitter to select those who use Twitter regularly; the full checklist is outlined below. While the focus will be on the representative sample, the

purposive sample groups have been selected to provide an alternate perception and a point of comparison. The first stage of this study will be a quantitative content analysis. All tweeted content from the sample groups will be copied directly from Twitter via *tweetdeck.twitter.com* and pasted onto prepared spreadsheets on Microsoft Excel. From here tweets will be categorised, analysed, and turned into statistical representations to help determine the types of content produced. The variables documented will be:

1. Tweet origin – Is the content original or re-tweeted
2. Tweeted content copied and pasted directly from Twitter
3. Was the content text, image, video, link, or other
4. Is the content: news, commentary supplementing the news, commentary expressing opinion, personal, conversation, or other
5. If the content is news, is it local, national or international
6. If the content is news, coding it for news values as per O'Neill and Harcup (2001)

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1	Journalist	Tweet		Time	Content type	Relation	in if news related	News Topic	News Value	Comment
2	Name	T or RT (inc where from)	Tweeted Content	Time of day and	Image, Video, Text, Link	Opinion, Commentary, Supplement, Personal, Conversation or NA/Other?	local, national, international	Sports, Political, Crime, NA etc	Oneil and Harcup	Comments or notes
3	DATE									
4										
5										
6										
7										
8										
9	DATE									
10										
11										
12										
13										
14										
15										
16										

For variable 5 the defining factors that help code for each content type are as follows:

1. News: Content that focuses on events or information that is present in an unbiased fashion
2. Commentary Supplement: Content that relates to a news event, but there is the addition of information that may or may not be necessary
3. Commentary Opinion: Content that relates to a news event, but there is an expressed opinion
4. Personal (or promotion for news organisations): Content that relates to the user's personal life
5. Conversation: Content that engages with other users
6. Other: Content that does not fit into the other categories

The second stage of this study is a qualitative content analysis. From the quantitative representation, the more statistically significant results will be analysed to highlight the exact content produced by New Zealand journalists. Here is where the answers to the research question will become apparent.

Methodology Sample Selection and Representation

There is an obstacle when it comes to sampling groups in content analysis studies and social media. As highlighted by Hedman's 2016 study; sampling on social media requires some leeway, as there is no definite way of equitably and accurately building a representative sample. With social media platforms; there is no clear way to tell how large population sizes are, who is in charge of the social media accounts, and whether or not the

sample will produce enough content to analyse. Random sampling is ill-advised as there is no guarantee of content, and the sample often provides inaccurate results (Hedman 2016, Lasorsa et al. 2012). For the purpose of this study, all sample groups were manually constructed via the researchers personal Twitter account. Locating journalists to follow involved searching various criteria such as user name, news organisation, and key hashtags, on both Twitter and Google.

A representative sample is built to provide the most credible and valid results. Representative samples need to reflect the characteristics of the population, but in situations where the population size is unclear, an artificial sample must be constructed. Similar to Hedman (2016), manually constructing a representative sample does weaken the study, but it is more consistent than a random sample. This study stems from Lasorsa et al.'s (2011) and builds on their methodology through a content analysis. Unlike Lasorsa et al. the sample size will be smaller, and time frame will be shorter; this is due to this study taking place in a different environment, and because a study only needs to be significant enough to securely establish a trend. Past studies have selected participants to follow on Twitter purely based on the number of followers they have; however, this does limit the research as this does not provide a fair representation of the population. Twitter is still developing its popularity in New Zealand. Therefore, there is no easily identifiable group of top journalists on Twitter to follow. The New Zealand journalist sample that must meet the following criteria:

1. New Zealand journalists need to be frequently tweeting. Given Twitter's slow growth in popularity, journalists will be expected to tweet a minimum of once a day.

2. New Zealand journalists should have an impact; this is about the audience and a number of followers a journalist has. Too few followers and the content produced can be considered insignificant as opposed to the content generated by a journalist with a larger following. Again, due to Twitter's relatively low popularity, a minimum of 500 followers is expected.
3. Journalists must currently reside in New Zealand and work for a reputable news source. No freelance journalists are included as the same regulations do not bind them.
4. All disciplines of news journalism need to be represented. The journalists will be selected from various news organisations and regions and will fall under print, radio, or television broadcast.

Furthermore: within this sample and the television representative sample, the location of each journalist is not as diverse as print, because broadcast journalists in smaller areas have fewer followers and do not tweet as frequently.

Representative Samples

Representative Sample of News Based New Zealand Journalist – Print-Based					
Name	Twitter Name	Followers	Publication	Position	Location
Jared Savage	@jaredsavageNZH	2835	NZ Herald	Senior Journalist	Auckland
Blair Ensor	@blairensor	2048	Press	Investigative Journalist	Christchurch
Simon Hendry	@simonhendry	2074	Waikato Times/ Dominion post	Journalist	Hawkes Bay
Michael Forbes	@michael_forbes	2180	Dominion Post	Senior Journalist	Wellington
Chris Morris	@journoman	637	Otago Daily Times	Senior Journalist	Dunedin
Jamie Searle	@SearleJamie	1275	Southland Times	Racing reporter	Invercargill
Jaimie Keay	@Jaimiekeay	821	Christchurch Star	Sports Reporter	Christchurch

Sarah Robson	@sarahsobson	1408	NZ News Wire	Political Journalist	Wellington/ Porirua
Susan Strongman	@SusanStrongman	986	NZ Herald	Breaking News Reporter	Auckland
Hamish McNeilly	@southernscoop	1614	Fairfax publications	Journalist	Dunedin
Sam Sherwood	@SamSherwood	674	The Press	Breaking News Reporter	Christchurch/ Canterbury

Representative Sample of News Based New Zealand Journalist - Radio Broadcast-Based

Name	Twitter Name	Followers	Provider	Position	Location
Megan Whelan	@meganjwhelan	2133	Radio NZ	Community Engagement	Wellington
Michael Cropp	@M_Cropp	1168	Radio NZ	Local Government Reporter	Wellington
Kim Baker Wilson	@kimbakerwilson	3842	Radio NZ	Reporter	Auckland
Kate Pereyra Garcia	@k8chap	2237	Radio NZ	Senior Reporter	Wellington
Kate Gudsell	@kategudsell	922	Radio NZ	Environment Reporter	Wellington
Tracy Neal	@TracyJNeal	550	Radio NZ	Top of the South Reporter	Nelson
Brenton Vannisselroy	@BVannisselroy	1280	Newstalk ZB	General and Sports Reporter	Auckland
Hannah Bartlett	@HannahBartlett	506	Newstalk ZB	Reporter	Auckland
Nigel Yalden	@NigelYalden	2300	Newstalk ZB	Sports reporter	Auckland
Frances Cook	@FrancesCook	2710	Newstalk ZB	Political Journalist	Wellington

Representative Sample of News Based New Zealand Journalist - Television Broadcast-Based

Name	Twitter Name	Followers	Provider	Position	Location
Chris Chang	@ChrisChang	2622	TVNZ	Reporter	Auckland
Ryan Boswell	@boswellryan	2497	TVNZ	Reporter	Wellington
Luke Appleby	@lukeappleby	2844	TVNZ	Reporter	Auckland
Joy Reid	@JoyReidTVNZ	3076	TVNZ	Reporter	Christchurch
Lisa Davies	@ldaviesonenews	2274	TVNZ	Reporter	Christchurch
Dianna Vezich	@DiannaVezich	946	Mediaworks	Reporter	Auckland
Maiki Sherman	@MaikiSherman	1755	Mediaworks	Political reporter	Wellington
Jenny Suo	@JennySou	688	Mediaworks	Reporter	Auckland
Ben Irwin	@BenGlrwin	1523	Mediaworks	Reporter	Wellington

Purposive Sample of New Zealand News Organisations

The study will use the tweets of New Zealand news organisation accounts as a base sample to determine prevailing news values to compare with the representative's samples

portrayal of news content. While not all these tweets will be reporting news, it is anticipated that much of content from this sample will be in line with news values. The basis for collecting data from a reputable news organisation is that the content should be reliable and is obligated to be an accurate representation of news in the public sphere. As a point of reference and a platform for comparison, the following news organisations were selected due to their dominance in the media industry, the frequency of tweeting content, and high volume of followers.

Name	Twitter Name	Followers	Provider
Stuff.co.nz	@NZStuff	122k	Fairfax
New Zealand Herald	@nzherald	205k	NZME
One News	@ONENewsNZ	120.1k	TVNZ
Newshub	@NewshubNZ	13.4k	Mediaworks
NewstalkZB	@NewstalkZB	22.1k	NZME
RadioLIVE	@RadioLIVENZ	20.4k	Mediaworks

Pilot Study

In November 2015, a pilot study of a representative sample was executed to ensure that this study was viable and that it would produce significant results. This pilot study was conducted to test the methodology and highlight any changes that should be made to enable the study to answer its research questions. This pilot study only accounted for the representative group as they are the core sample, and central to answering the research question. The pilot study took place over a 48-hour period and followed the stipulated methodological outline. The pilot study was carried out on 4th and 5th of November 2015 and gathered tweets from midnight till midnight. Regardless of content, all tweets and retweets were documented. This pilot study helped refine the research question and highlighted areas of interest where there is more opportunity to conduct future research.

Pilot Study results

Overall the pilot study produced a mixture of results that helped refine this study. Twitter allows users to take the production of media content into their hands, but there needs to be a high level of followers for their content to have an impact. The pilot found a limited amount of actual news-related tweets (18.5% of overall tweets); most newsworthy content originated from journalists retweeting content posted by their parent organisation or workplace. This reduction of news-based tweets in the pilot study meant that this study needed to look past news and news values (they will still be taken into consideration), and dive into the empirical nature of journalists and the practice of journalism.

Twitter Feed Break Down

Out of the 13 journalists followed, only 8 of them tweeted within the 48-hour timeframe, and the other 5 did show activity prior or following the data collection period. Over the 48-hour time frame, journalists produced 124 tweets: 23 tweets were considered newsworthy or having significant news values, applying O'Neill and Harcup's criteria (2001). This result means that only 18.5% of tweets were deemed to pertain to news values. News values were predicted to have a stronger presence in this pilot study. It was judged that a longer period of data collection should yield better results. Additionally, the sample groups were reviewed just before the methodology began to ensure that the frequency of tweets and sample groups were still consistent enough to collect data. In relation to news values; 32% of tweets were a commentary on news or conversation around news events which helps illustrate journalists' discourse and how they choose to discuss the news and communicate with each other. Though out the pilot study, the majority of commentary

tweets made seemed to supplement the news rather than alter the angle or perception of the news story itself. Therefore, the commentary category was divided into two: Commentary Opinion and Commentary Supplement.

This pilot helped illustrate that it is likely that major events will dictate discussion and influx of tweets and so affect sampling. On November 5th, the All Blacks returned from the Rugby World Cup, and 55 of the 124 tweets came from one journalist who documented their arrival, and activities throughout the day. It is important to separate out these kinds of events as they can skew results, but they do help depict journalist discourse around highly publicised events, and whether the events position journalists to abide by news values or if they place their bias/perception on the event.

RESULTS

On the surface, the content does not seem like a significant with 5,614 tweets collected during the two-week timeframe. However, some patterns and trends emerged that help depicts the tweeting habits of journalists and preferences regarding content. As a reminder, this study is cautious about the validity of its data as the scope of journalism in New Zealand has no defined boundaries; rather the research helps illustrate the online habits and the digital news environment from an objective vantage point. For continuity, the results discussion looks at tweets and retweets together as it is the content that is the primary focus of this study. After the data was collected and analysis, a sample of t-tests were compiled but yielded little in terms of usefulness and statistical significance.

Representative Sample

The representative sample was split into three subgroups so that all areas of news journalism were represented fairly, and different disciplines of journalism could be compared and contrasted. Each group presented a mixture of results and did not provide clear trends in New Zealand news journalism. However, there are some comparisons that suggest an ideal state in news journalism to which the journalists are orienting much of the time.

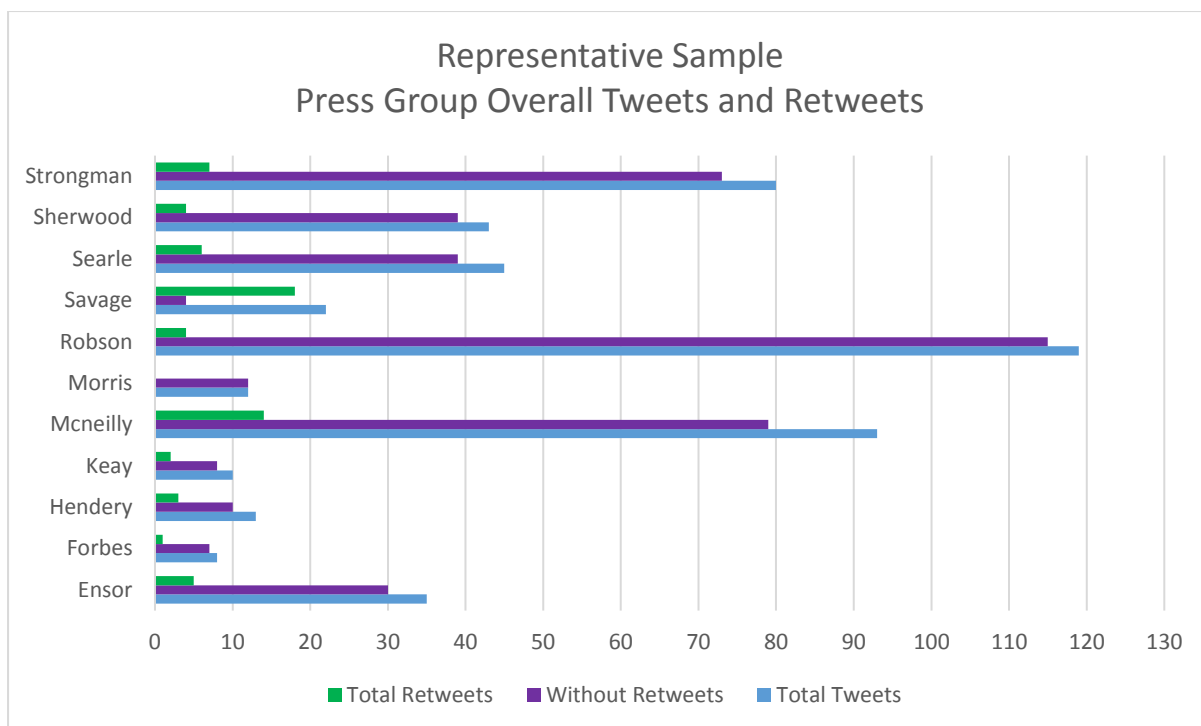
The Print-Based Sample

Members of the print-based group averaged 43.64 tweets for the 14-day period. There were a few journalists who tweeted more than others that might skew the results

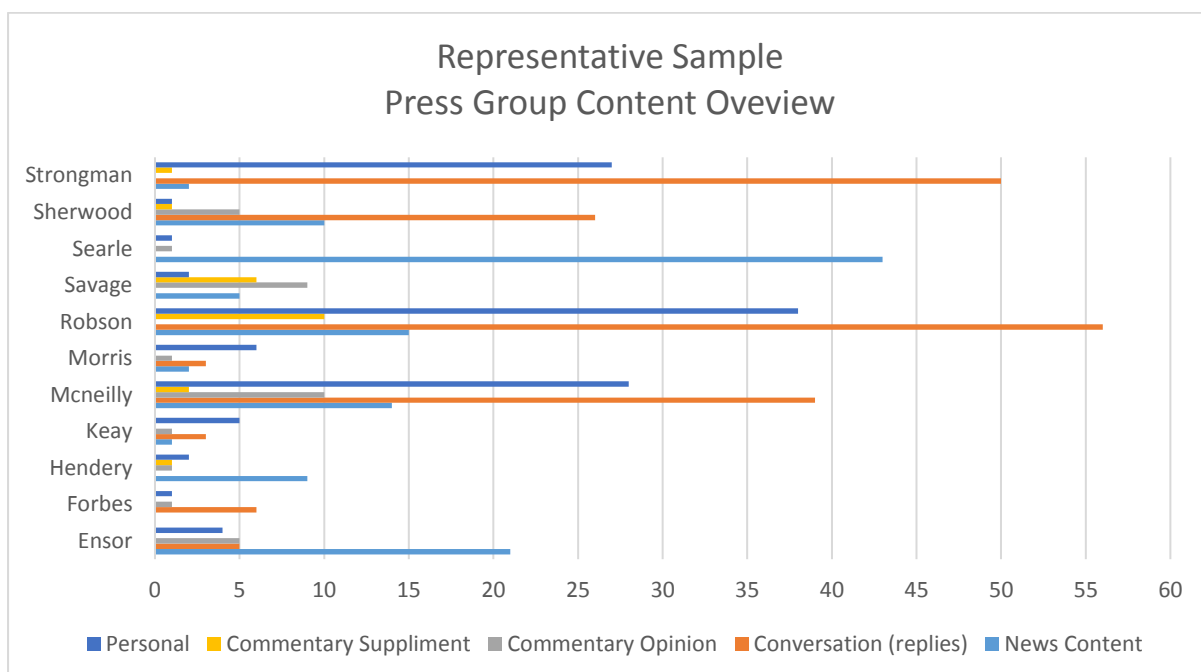
slightly, but this will be looked at further on. There was a significant difference in the level of tweets and retweets in all samples. The press sample showed 86.67% tweets and 13.33% retweets (graph 1). This percentage indicates journalists' preference towards original content rather than reproducing news content. From the retweets; 57.98% contained non-news content, showing a stronger interaction with non-news related content compared to news related content.

The results for the print-based sample group suggest that news content is a strong contribution to the journalists tweeting habits, but it is not the dominating category (graph 2). News content made up 25.42% of overall content, compared to commentary opinion and commentary supplement with a combined total of at 11.45%. Within this sample group, Searle might skew the data slightly, and boosts the percentage of news content. This is due to his field of sports reporting as Searle makes up 35.25% of news-based tweets for this group.

Print-based journalists demonstrated a strong preference to the conversation and personal tweets resulting in 63.13% (39.17% conversation and 23.96% personal) of tweets not about or referencing news content. Within this sample, three journalists appear to dominate the conversation and personal categories: McNeilly, Robson, and Strongman's personal tweets made up 80.87% of the total personal tweets and made up 77.13% of total conversational tweets (graph 2).

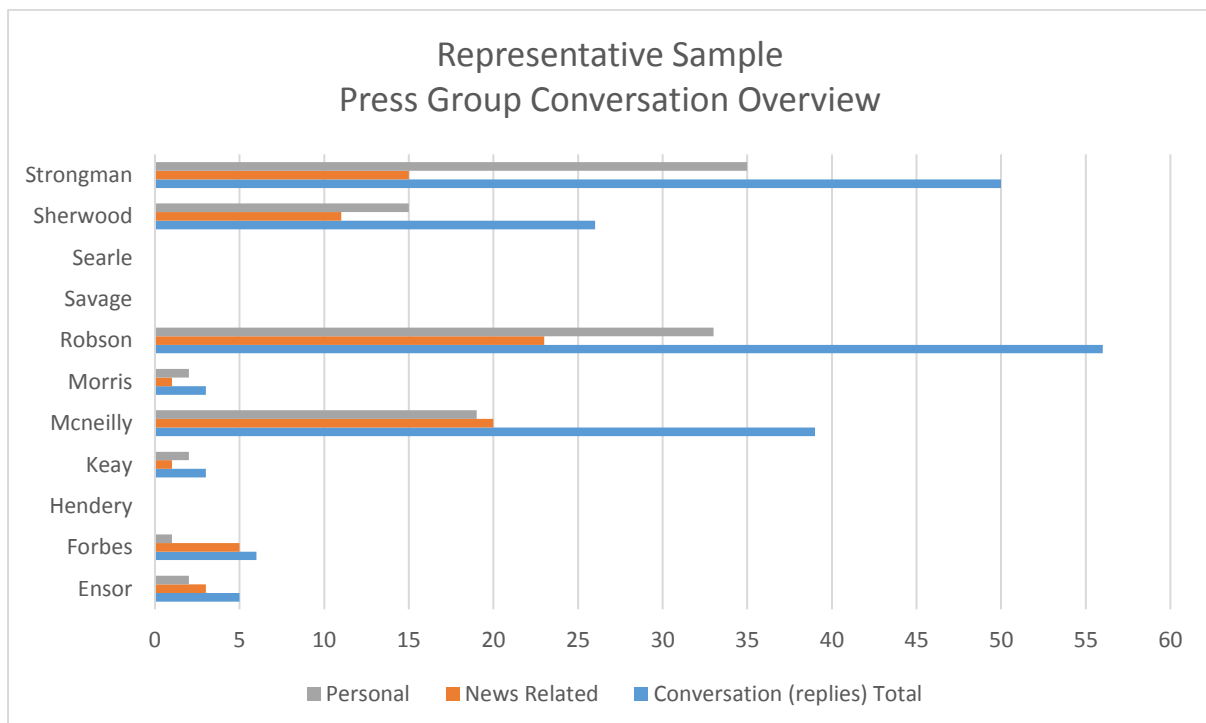


Graph 1

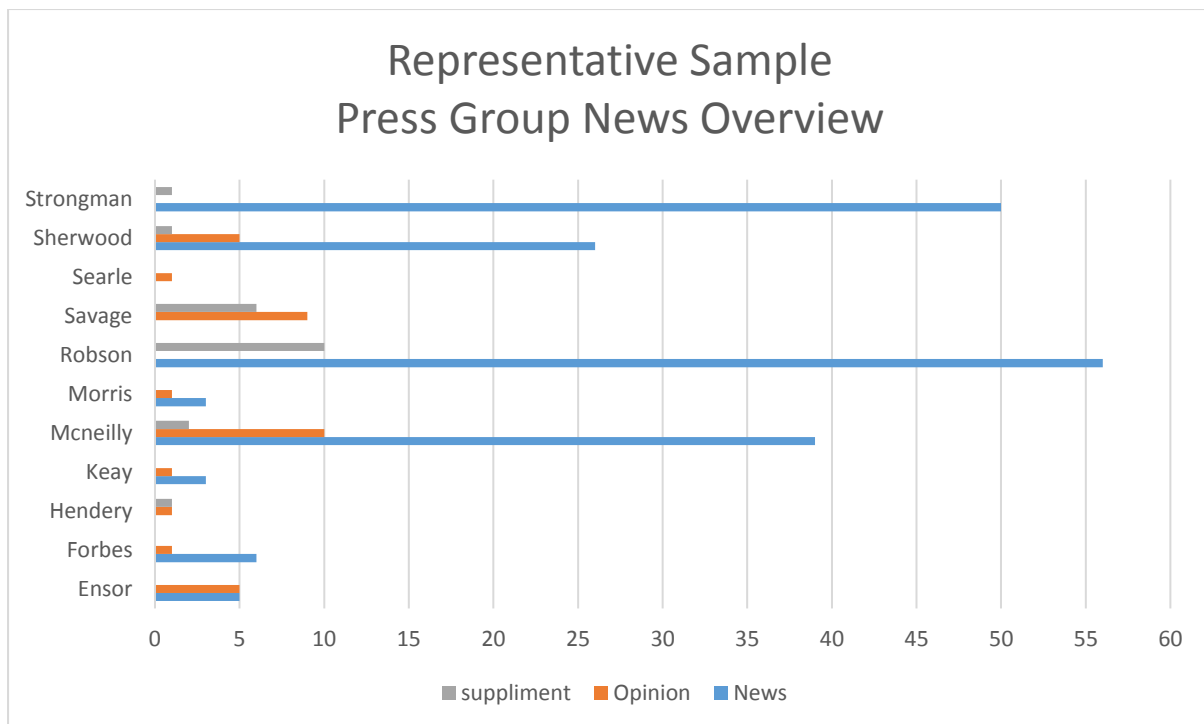


Graph 2

Retweets do not demonstrate replies. Rather “conversation” outlines the replies and interactions on Twitter. Within the small level of conversations by journalists, that level of replies was moderate enough to demonstrate the frequency of journalists engaging on Twitter; 39.17% of overall press journalist’s tweets were conversation based. Within the conversational tweets, 57.98% contained personal content, and 42.02% were news related (graph 3).

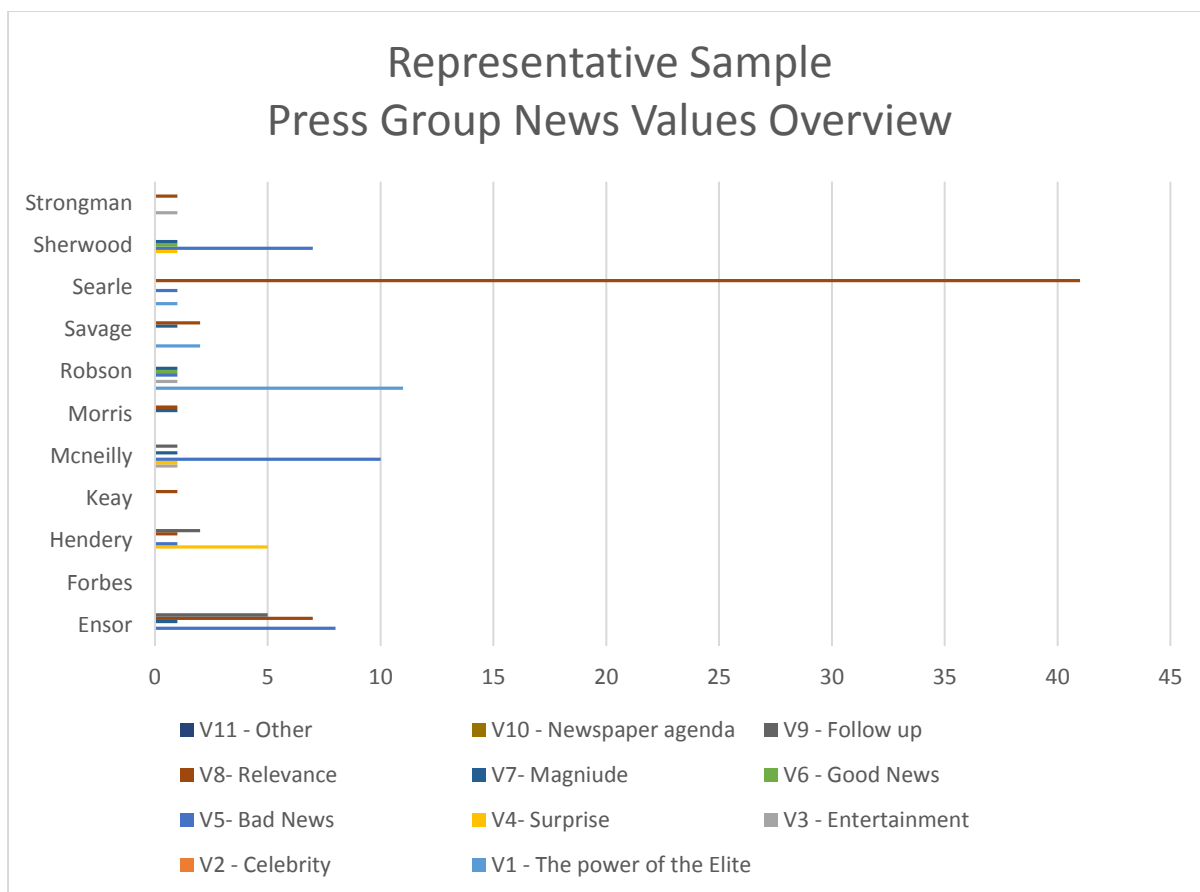


Graph 3



Graph 4

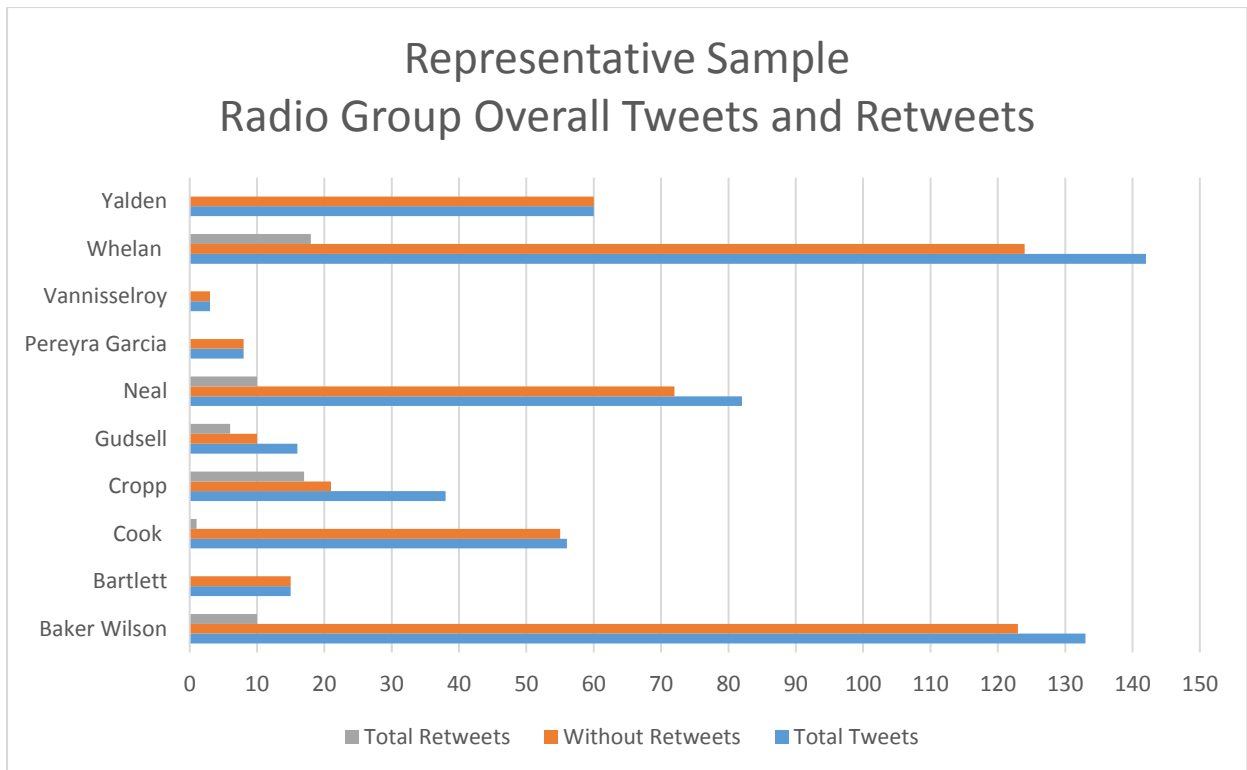
News Values present in the print-based sample group were strongly weighted in preference of relevant news stories (44.19%) and bad news stories (22.90%). In contrast, there was little representation of good news stories (1.60%) and entertainment news stories (2.40%), and no representation of celebrity news stories or newspaper agenda news stories (graph 5). Again, Searle might skew the data slightly as his prominence of news based content fell into the Relevant news based category; however, if Searle's tweets were to be removed from this sample relevant news stories would still be a dominant news value.



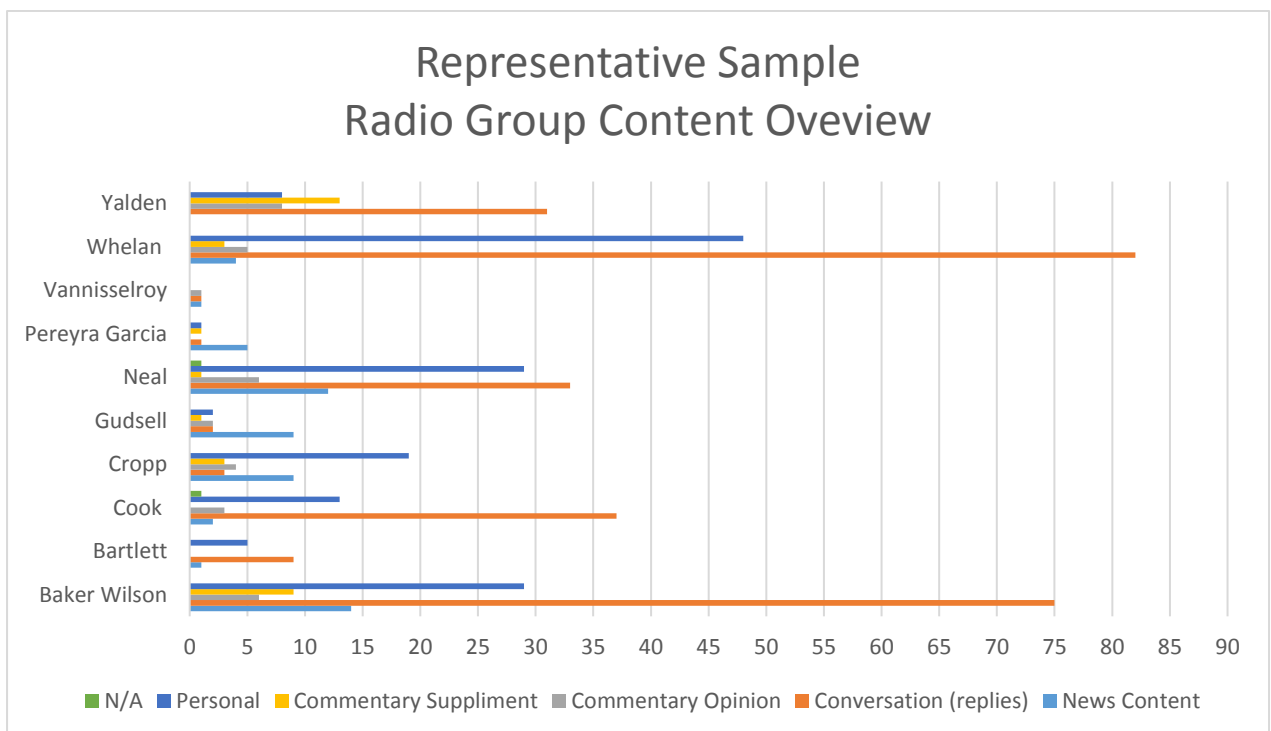
Graph 5

The Radio-Based Sample

The tweets from the radio-based sample group averaged out at 55.30 for the 14-day period, and they were the highest frequency tweeters from the representative sample. Tweets made up 88.79% and retweets made up 11.21% of all tweets. From the retweets, 22.58% pertained to news content, and 77.42% were from other content (graph 6).

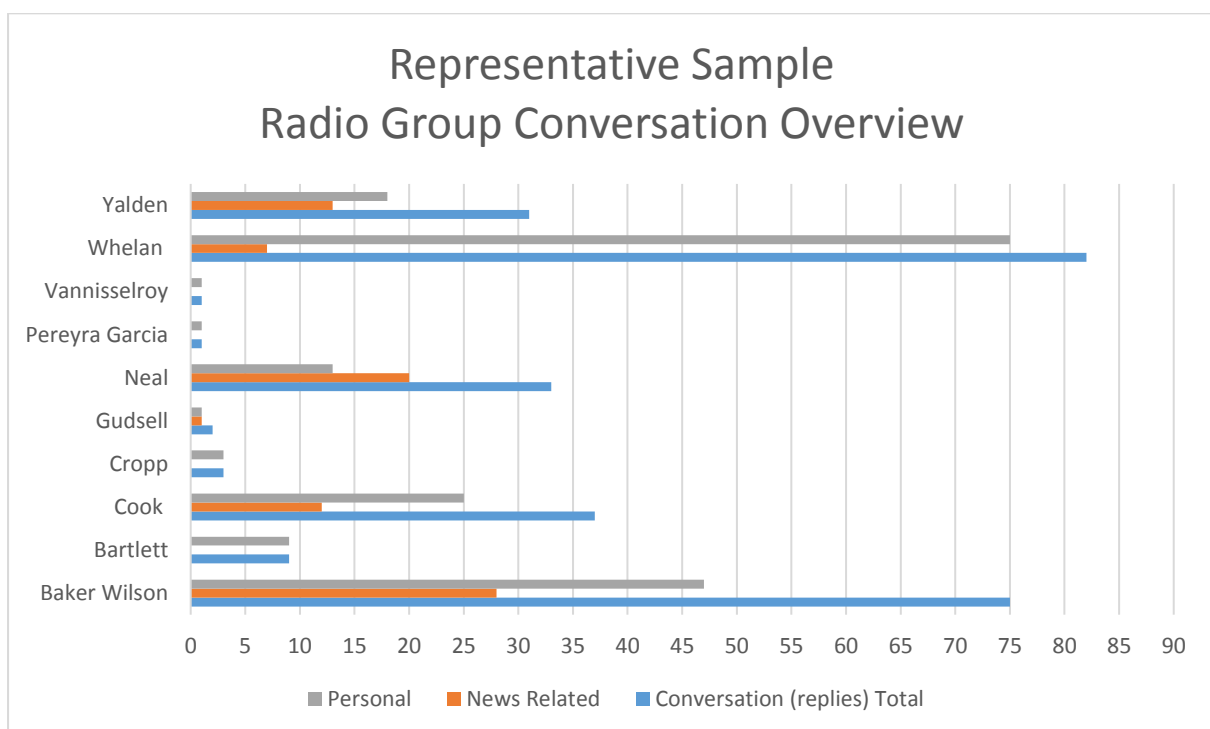


Graph 6

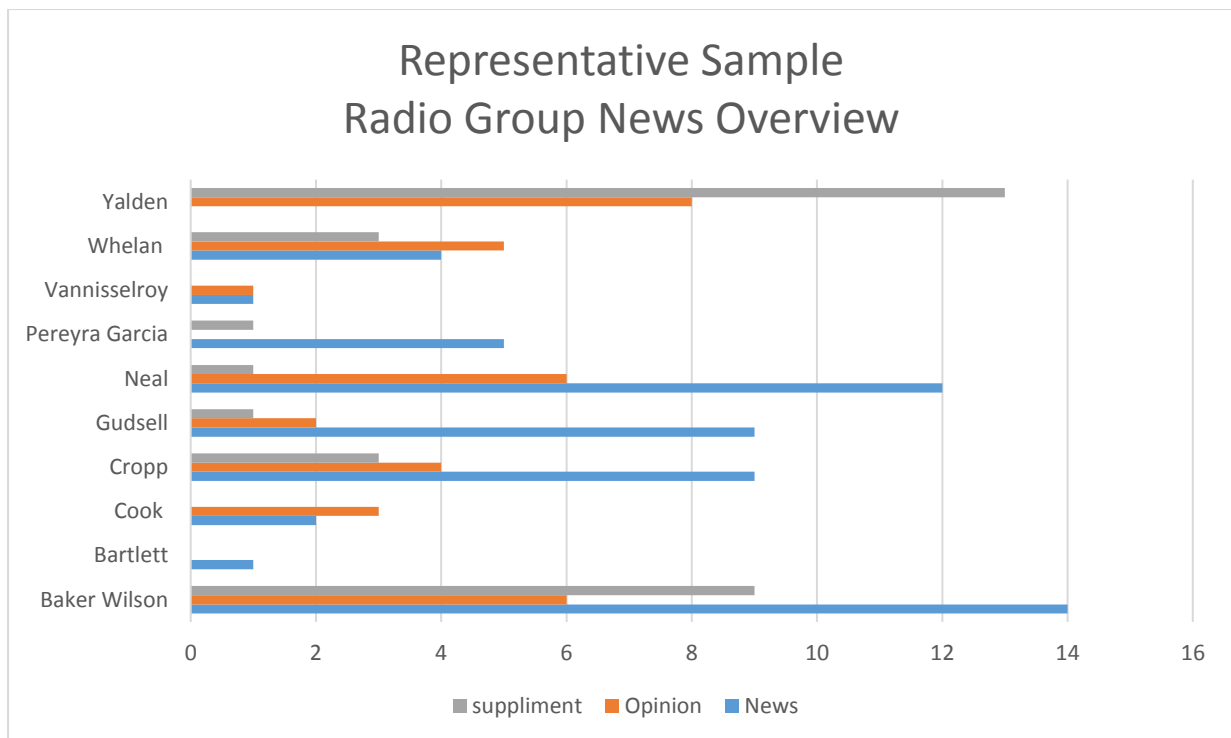


Graph 7

There is an interesting result that can potentially skew the data; Baker Wilson and Whelan make up nearly half (49.73% combined) of the overall tweets, and the majority of their tweets was conversation (57.30% combined) and personal (50.00% combined). On the other end of the scale, Pereyra Garcia and Vennisselroy only contributed 1.99% of overall tweets, and they did not retweet, and the content that was tweeted was predominantly news based on 10.52%, bad news, and power of the elite of overall news tweets (graph 7). Within the conversation based tweets; 29.56% were news related, and 70.44% were personal, which reinforces journalists' use of Twitter as a more personal communicative tool.

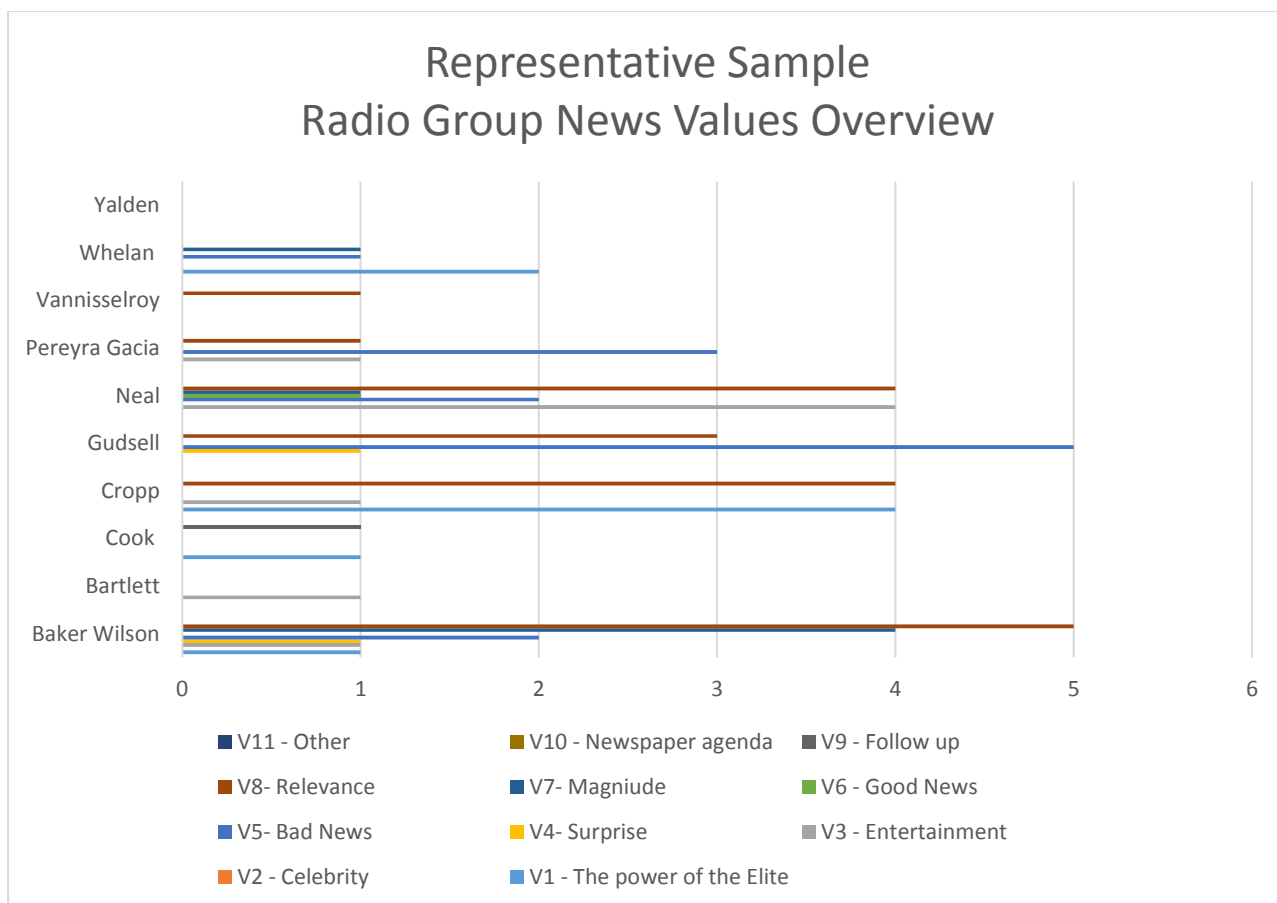


Graph 8



Graph 9

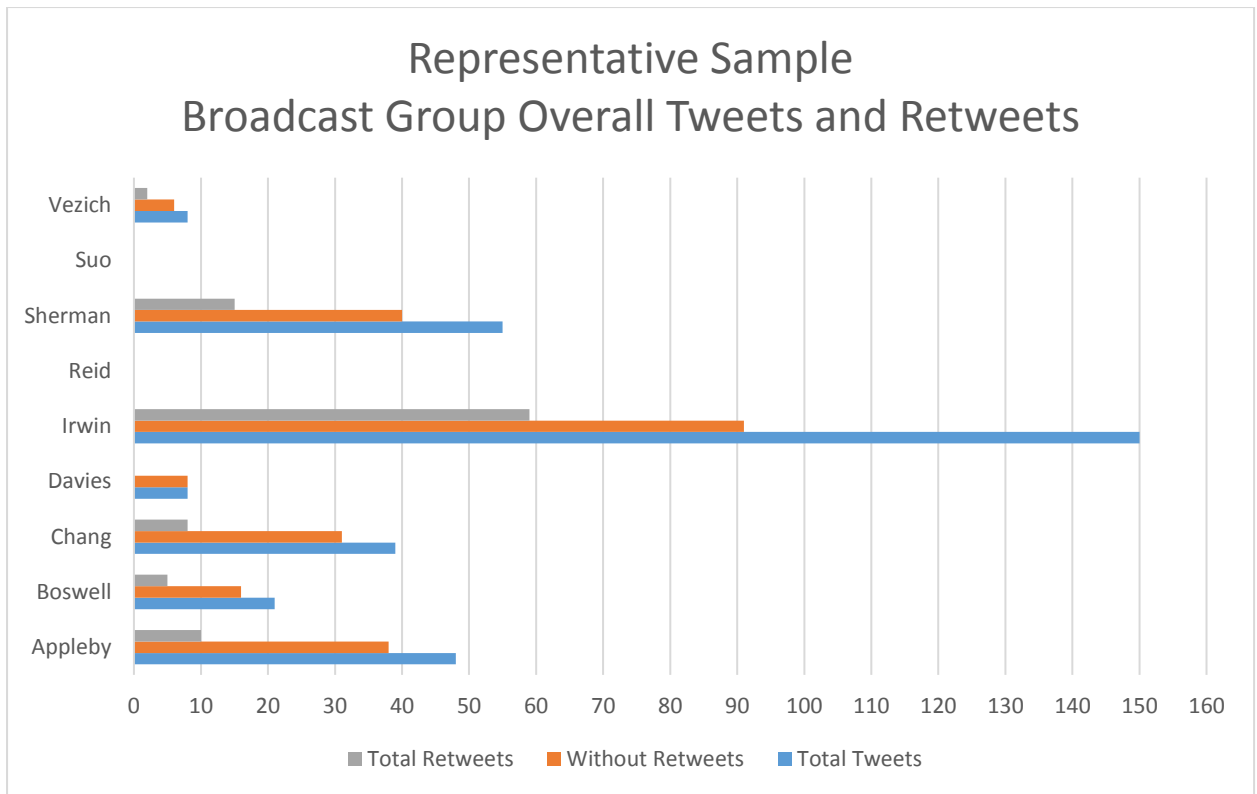
The radio-based sample depicted a strong preference to conversation tweets nearly making up half of the overall content (49.55%). This was followed up by personal tweets which made up 27.85% of the overall content. News content was 10.31% and is the lowest representation of news for the representative sample. Within the news content, the most prominent news values were: relevant news stories 31.57% and bad news stories 22.84%. in comparison, surprise news stories, good news stories, and follow-up news stories were barely represented, and celebrity news stories and newspaper agenda (more so news organisation agenda) news stories were not represented (graph 10).



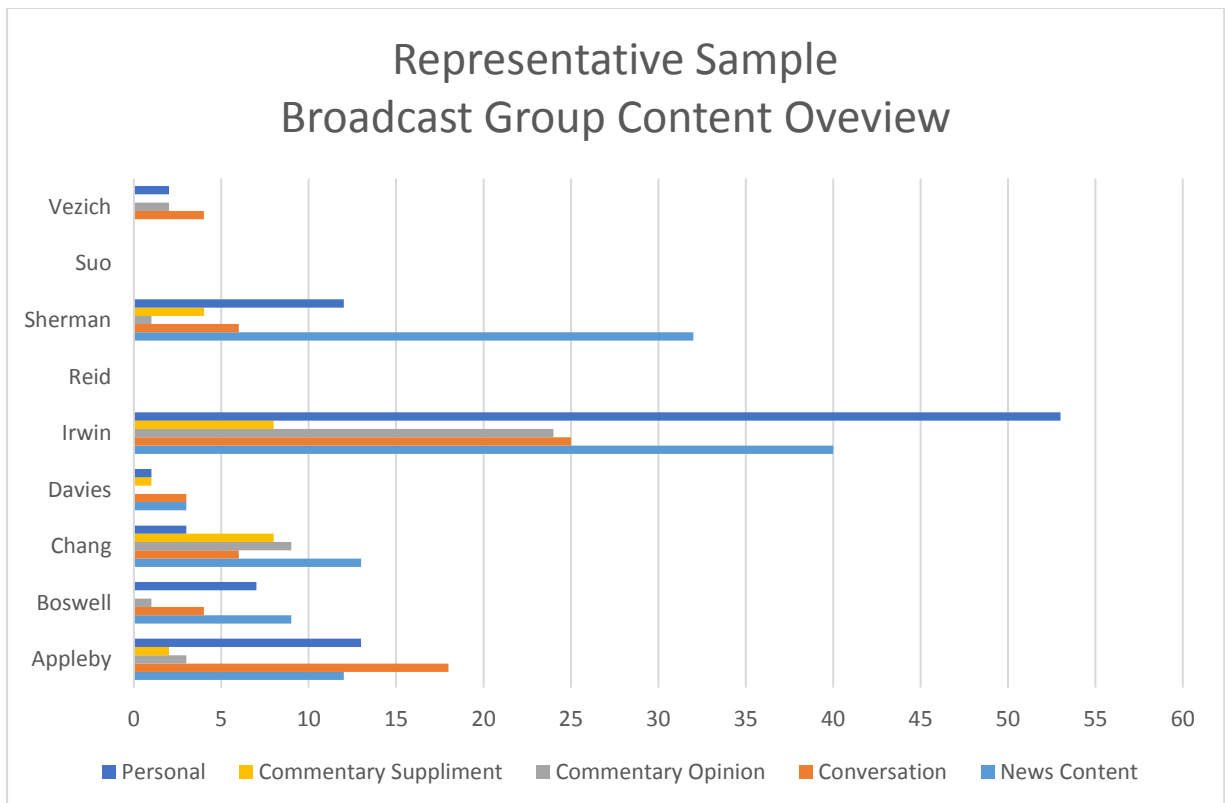
Graph 10

The Television-Based Sample

Television-based journalists group averaged out at 36.56 tweets for the 14-day data collection period. Tweets made up 70.52% and retweets made up 29.48%, which results in the broadcast-based group being the highest Retweeters in the representative sample (graph 11). From the retweets; 42.27% were from a news source and 57.73% from other sources. This also makes this group the highest retweets of news content, which might be a result of television- based journalists having more access to visual content.

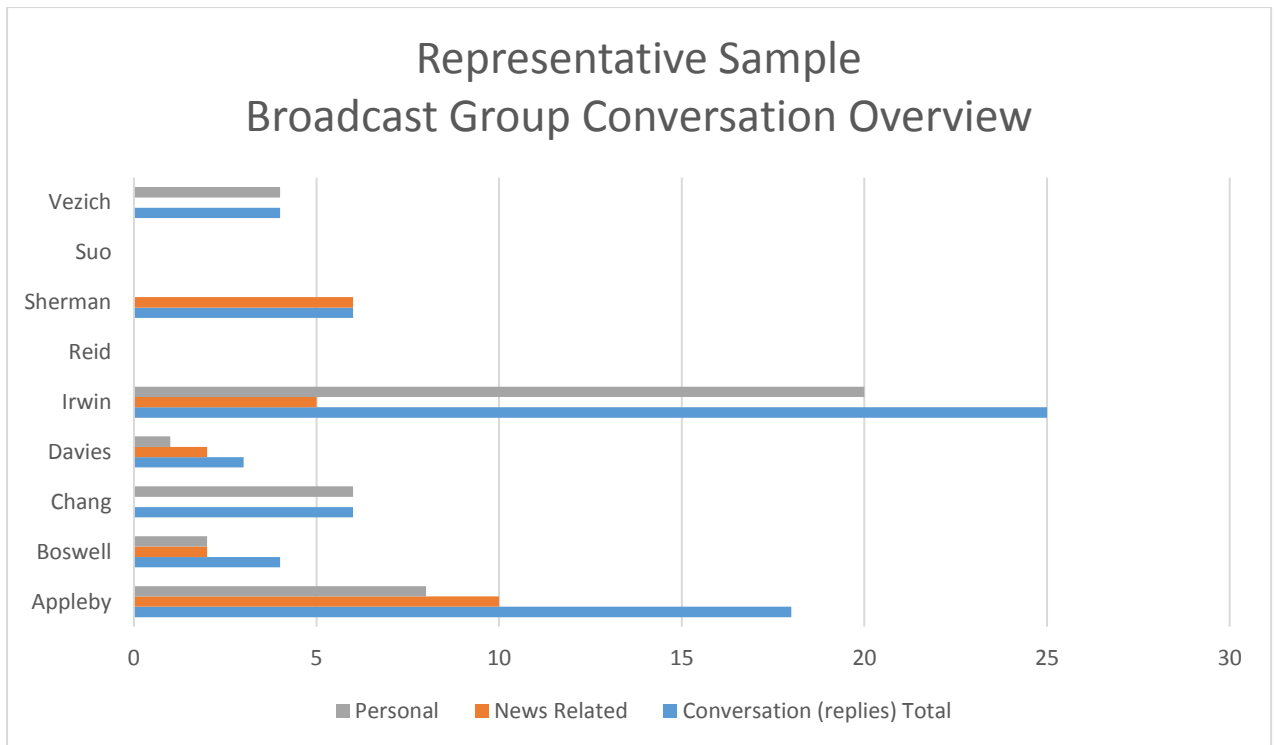


Graph 11

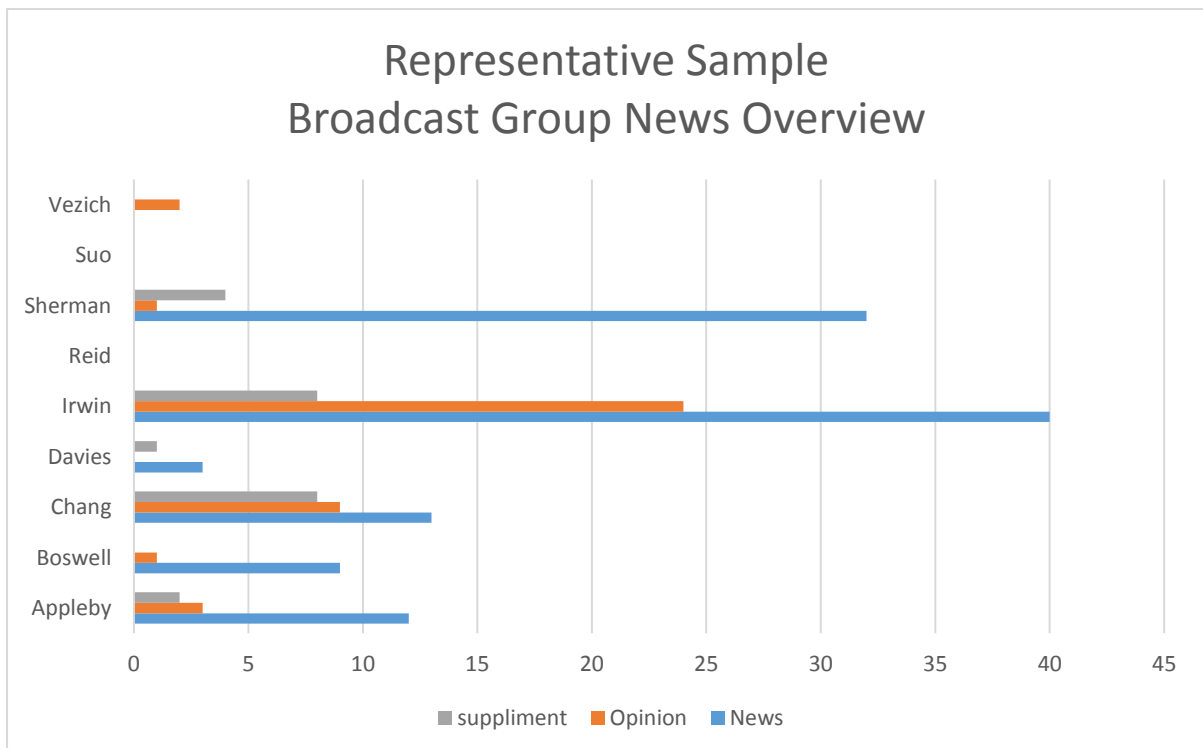


Graph 12

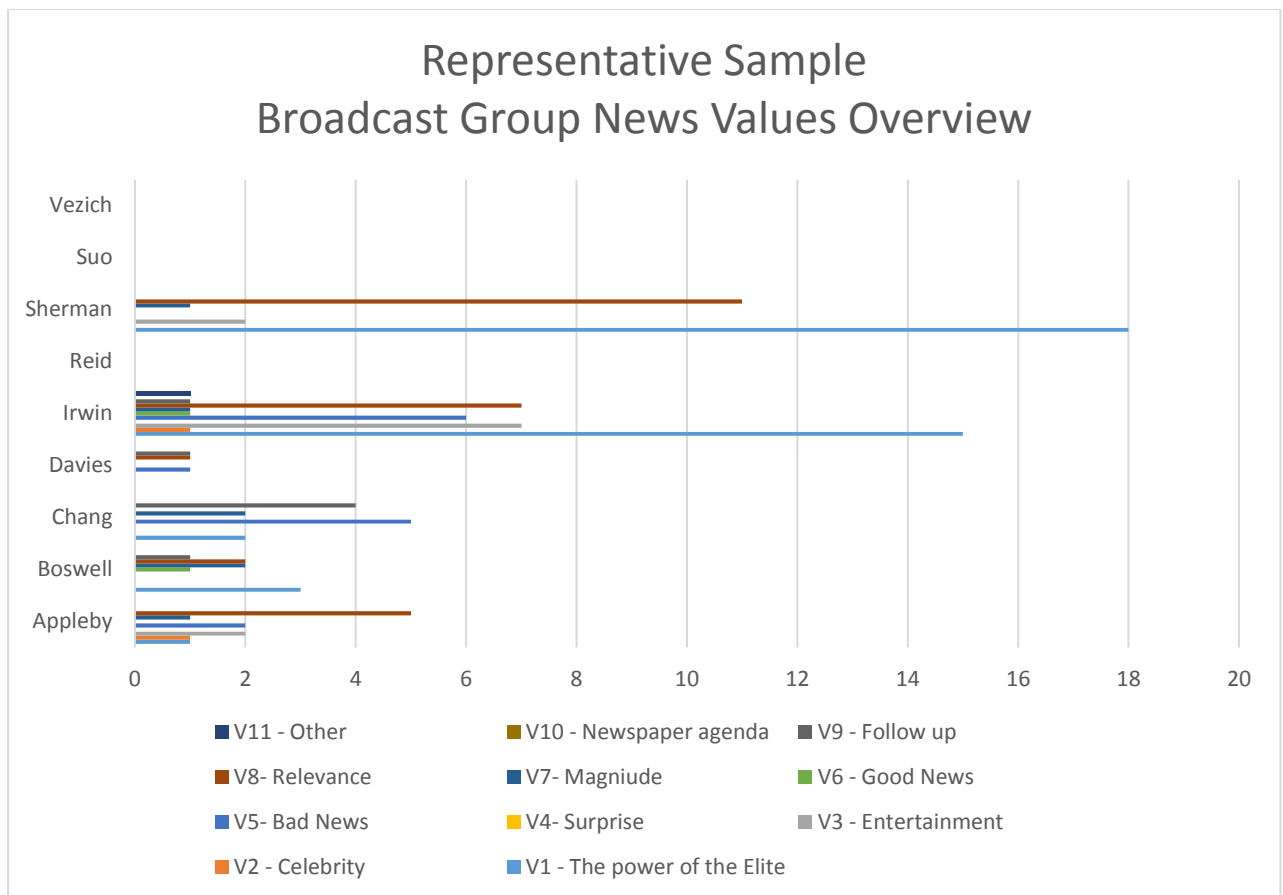
The dominant content produced by the television-based sample group was news content (33.13%), making them the strongest contributors of news based content from the representative sample. The second most dominant were the personal tweets (27.66%), then the conversation tweets (20.06%). Again, this might be caused by television based journalists having access to more visual content. From the conversation tweets, 37.88% related to news and 62.12% related to other content (graph 12). In this subgroup Irwin was the dominant tweeter, generating 45.59% of the overall content. Providing opposite results, Reid and Suo did not tweet during the data collection process (graph 14). From the news tweets, the dominant news value was a reference to the elite with 35.77%, followed by relevant news with 23.85%. In comparison, surprise news and newspaper agenda news were not represented in this subgroup (graph 15).



Graph 13



Graph 14



Graph 15

The Representative Sample as a Whole

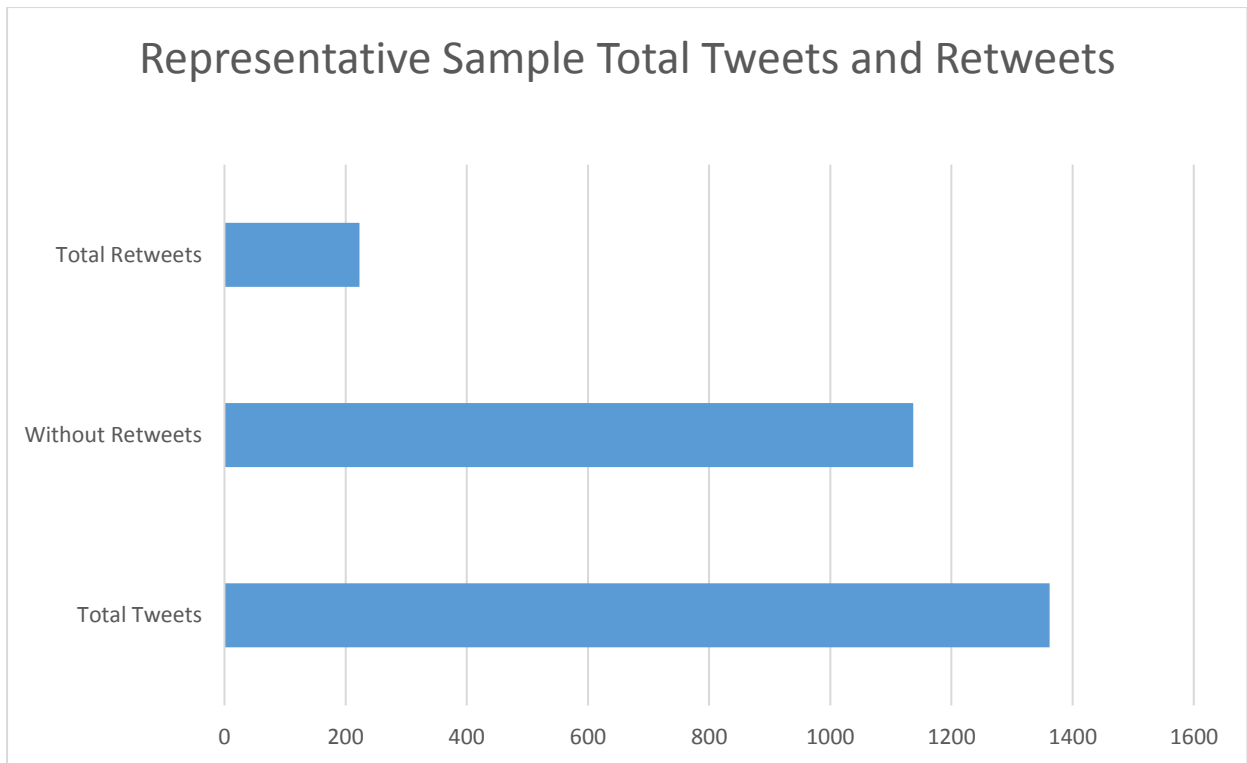
Overall, the representative sample of New Zealand journalists illustrates a few key trends. It can be strongly argued that each subgroup exhibits similar strengths and weaknesses and that many of the variations can be pinpointed to an individual's content. The results indicate the following trends.

The data shows that journalists prefer to generate and disseminate their own content, with 83.48% of their content comprising original tweets, compared to the 16.52% of retweets. From the retweets; 31.11% pertained to news content while the remainder

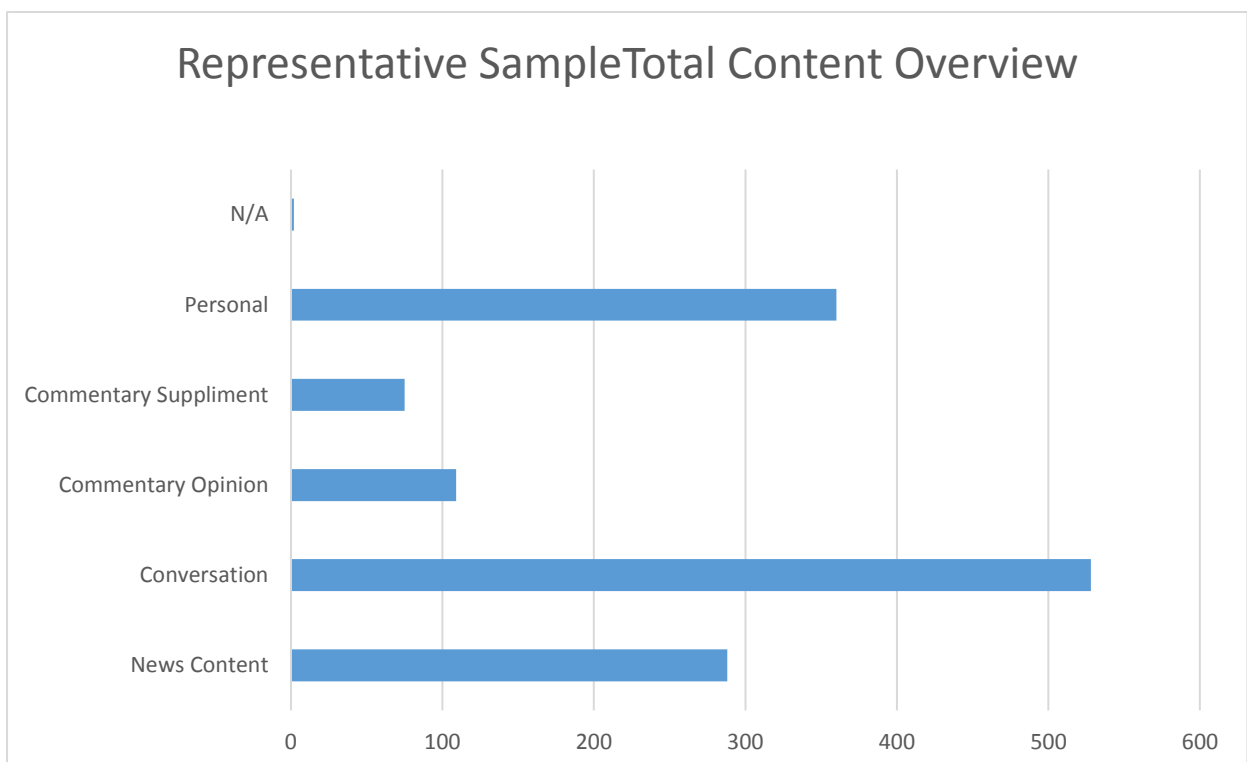
(68.89%) referenced personal or non-news related content (graph 16). The high number of retweets containing personal content reinforces the trend that journalists use of Twitter is not limited to their profession. The most frequent tweeters were Robson, Whelan, Baker Wilson, and Irwin; their individual results are in line with the norms set by the sample.

The most prominent content produced by journalists was conversation tweets at 38.77% of the overall content. From this 35.04% was news related and 64.96% was non-news related content (graph 17). This helps suggest that moderate journalists use Twitter as a multi-directional communication tool, much like Facebook Messenger but in a public forum. There was evidence of supporting news content (commentary opinion and commentary supplement), but the data shows that they were weak categories and that journalists produced more objective news based content

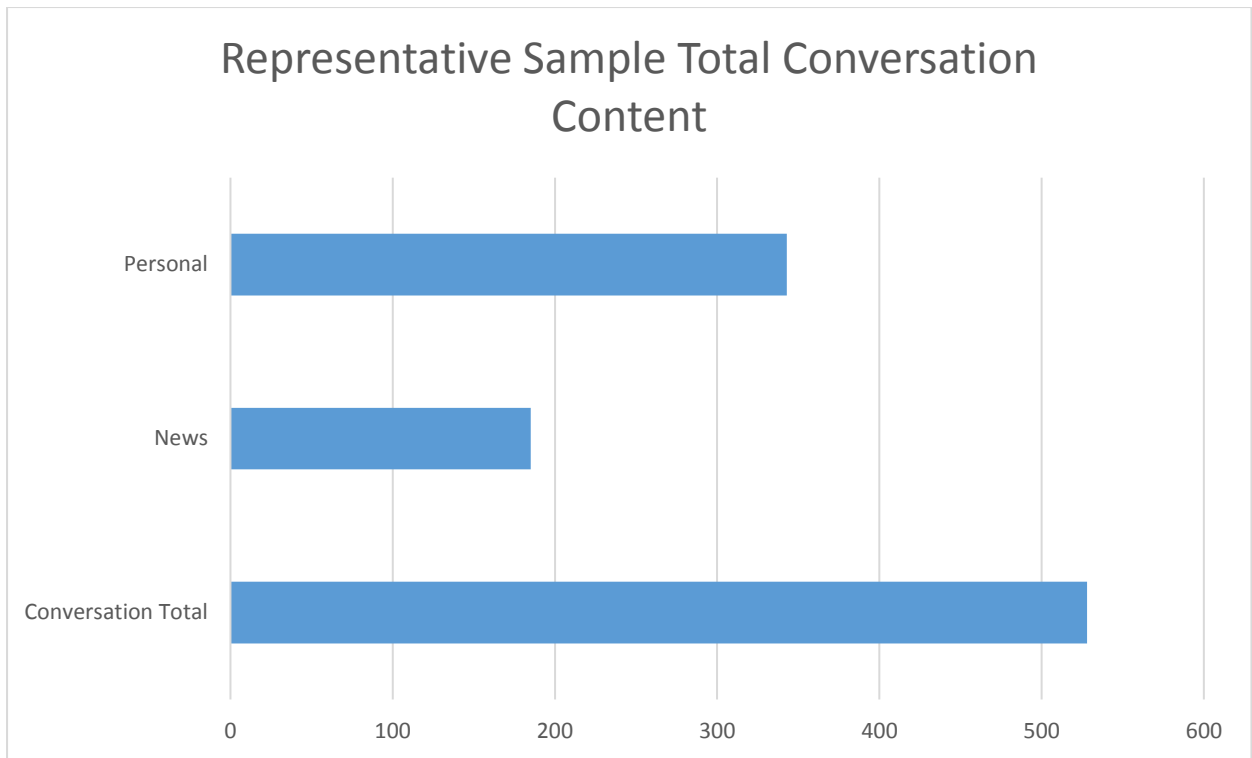
The strongest news values present in the representative sample were relevance, bad news and power of the elite with a combined total of 74.30% of total news values. The weakest news values were celebrity and good news stories, and newspaper agenda based values did not appear (graph 20).



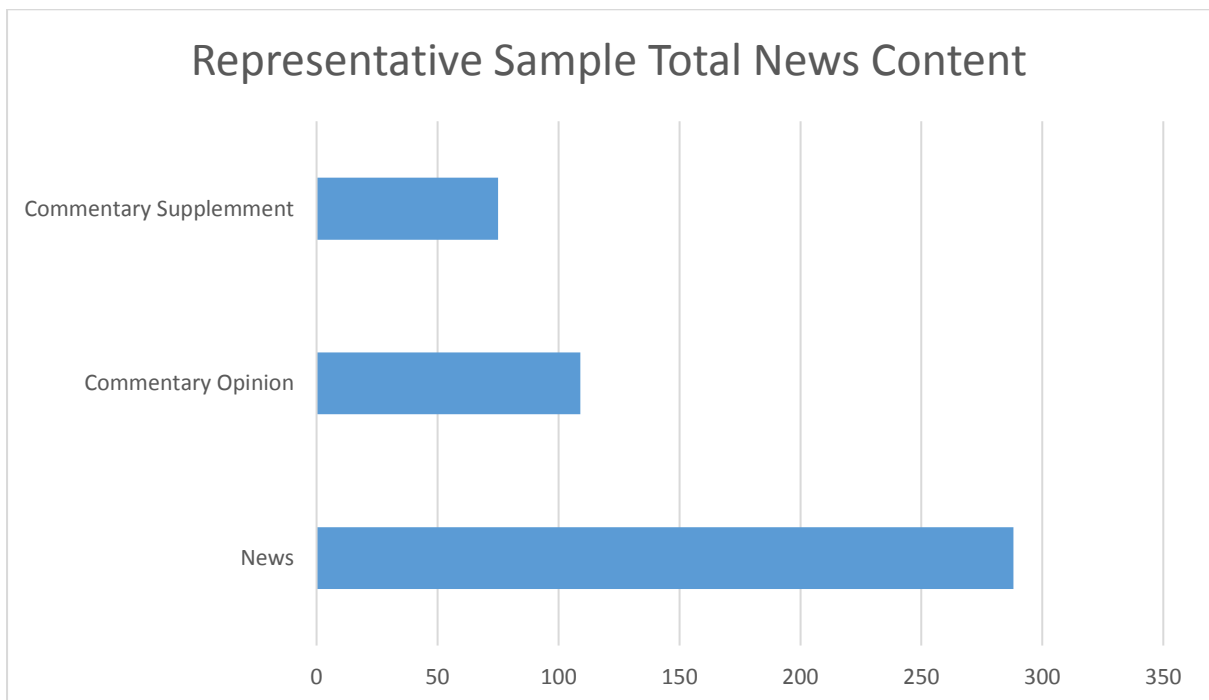
Graph 16



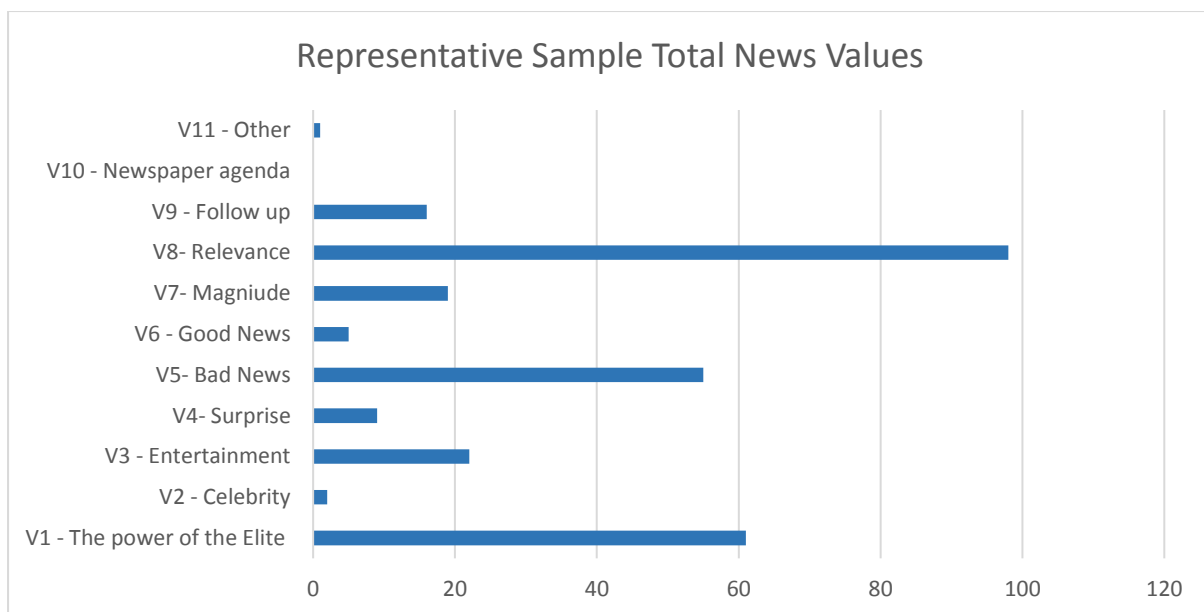
Graph 17



Graph 18



Graph 19



Graph 20

Purposive Sample Group: News Organisations

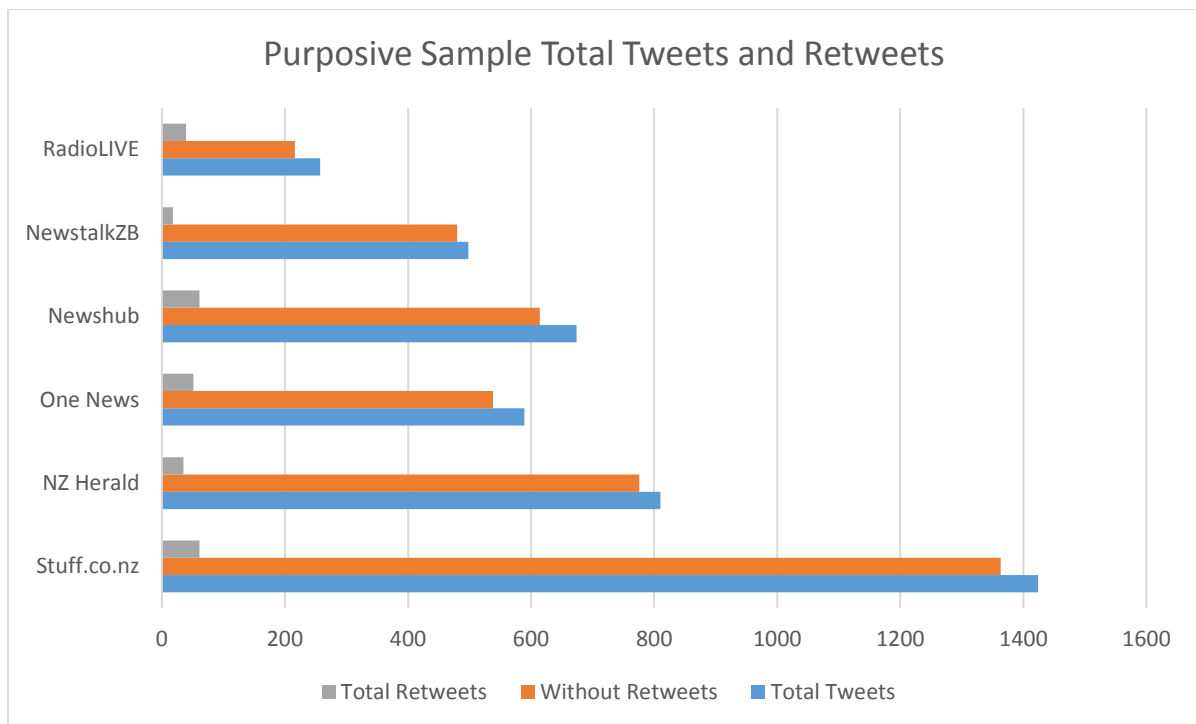
News organisations were the most frequent tweeters, with an average of 709 tweets per the 14-day data collection period. Overall 93.77% were tweets, and 6.23% were Retweets (graph 21). From the retweets, 79.25% were news content relates, and 20.75% were other content. Within this sample group, *Stuff.co.nz* was the dominant producer of overall content, accumulating 33.49% of the total number of tweets, and was the only one who significantly replied or engaged in conversation at 2.18% while the other news organisations were >0.1%. This limited engagement was produced in the format of the news organisations thanking followers who pointed out errors in the news stories and sharing news articles that were relevant to a specific conversation.

Unlike the representative sample, this sample group is more focused on news content. News content made up 88.50% of overall tweeted content, highlighting that news

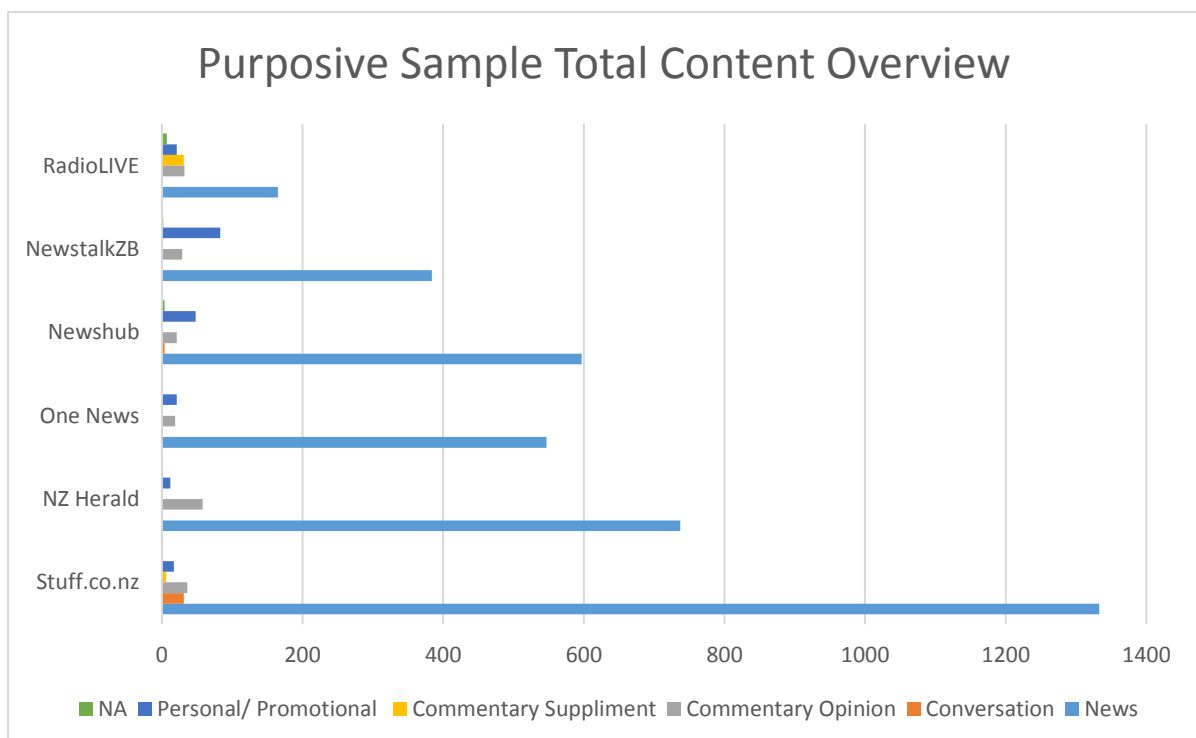
is still the primary content for news organisations. Supporting news content in the form of commentary opinion and commentary supplement was evident at 5.48% (graph 22) of overall tweets, suggesting that procedures around presenting news articles on social media are becoming more informal. Another reason why this supporting content exists could be due to the use of rhetorical questions as headlines, which positions the tweet into more of a narrative rather than a news article.

The data showed that 4.75% of the overall tweets contained self-promotional content, illustrating Twitter's use as an advertising vehicle for the news organisation. Also from the non-news related retweets, 78.18% were deemed promotional, further illustrating Twitter's role in self-promotion. Furthermore, promotion includes tweets that encourage engagement without any to follow up from the user. The evidence of self-promotion on Twitter suggests that news organisations are using other avenues of social media to encourage audience engagement.

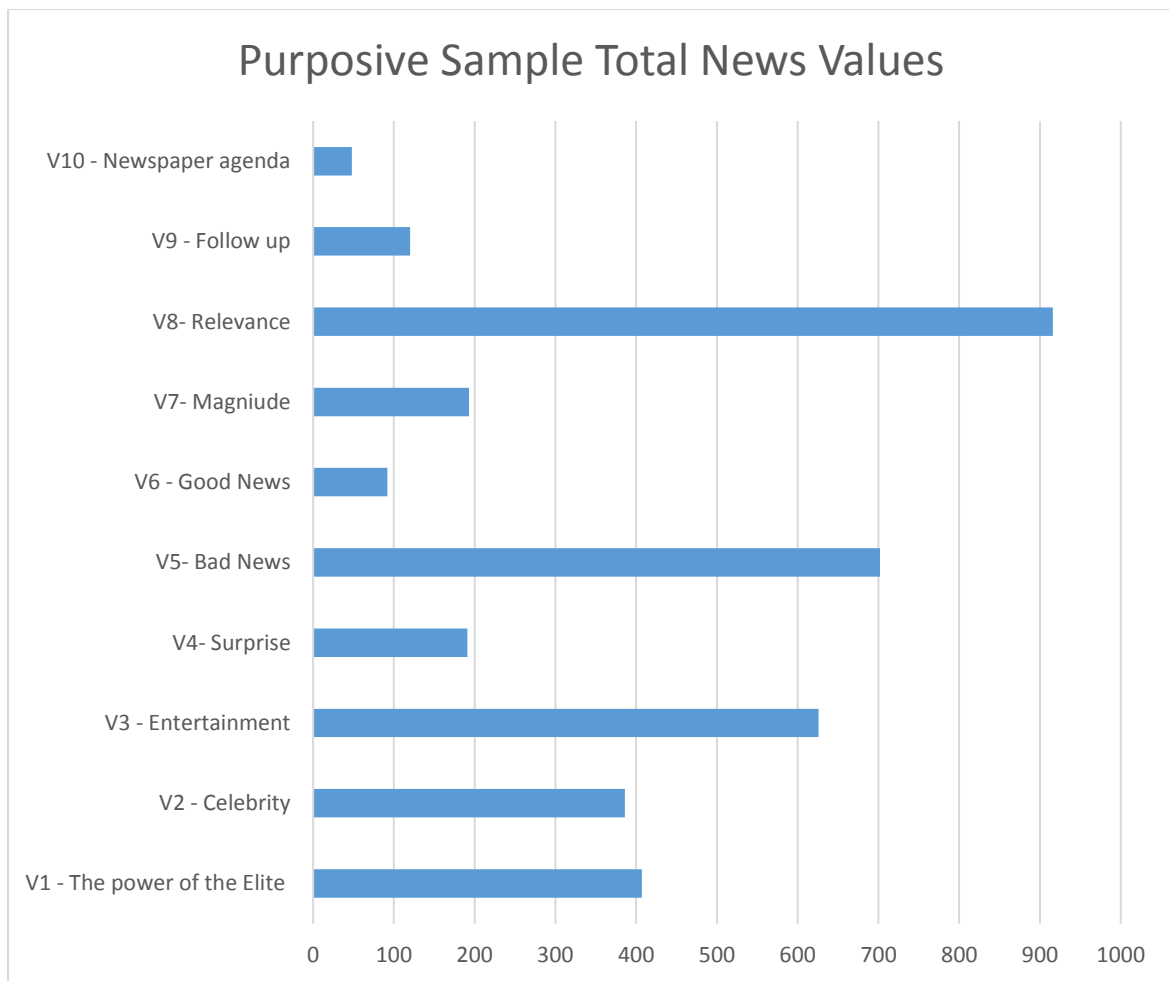
The strongest news value present in the purposive sample was relevance at 24.30% of the total News content, which is in line with the prominence Relevance had in the representative sample. The next two strongest news values were bad news (18.63%) and entertainment (16.61%). The weakest news values were newspaper agenda (1.27%) and other (2.33%). Tweets that were categorised as other did not correlate with any other news value and provide an interesting insight into new forms of news content (graph 23).



Graph 21



Graph 22



Graph 23

ANALYSIS

Representative Sample

The statistical data is only a snapshot of the content tweeted by all sample groups, but the evidence that nearly every individual within the representative sample tweeted to some degree helps illustrate that social media is increasingly an integrated part of journalism. Regarding answering the dominant research questions, the qualitative content analysis will be employed to look at specific examples of content posted by both sample groups. Interpretation of these results helps highlight characteristics of journalists on Twitter, and what kinds of content dominate a journalist's Twitter feed. The data also helps provide insight into news organisations' tweeting trends and how they draw upon news values. As outlined in the methodology, the qualitative content analysis looks at the content on Twitter and helps to drill down on some of the most specific content that has emerged in the data collection. By concentrating on specific tweets, it allows this research to help illustrate the more dominant images, patterns, and trends.

Representative Sample Group

The journalists from the representative sample group provided evidence of specific trends and tendencies of New Zealand journalists on Twitter. Each subgroup from the representative sample pertains to a specific media form which may explain some of the subtle differences between each subgroup, as noted above in the higher visual content tweeted by television journalists. By looking at specific journalists' newsfeeds, it can help define the content and provide specific examples of journalists on Twitter. Furthermore, this can provide insight into the established trends present in the raw data.

Analysis – Retweets

The most noticeable result established amongst the entire representative sample was the low number of retweets. The low level of retweets strongly suggests that journalists in the representative sample hold their autonomy when it comes to tweeted content. In other words, their profession does not appear to govern their tweeted content; rather it is implied that Twitter is another tool for communication, regardless of the user's directive. Low level of retweets also suggests that journalists from the representative sample prefer to produce their content rather than share that from others, which can be argued as journalists representing themselves in a transparent manner (Hedman 2016). This allows journalists to be held responsible for their content outside of their occupational identity, further implying that their tweeted content is their individual responsibility and not that of their governing news organisation.

From the retweets, content from non-news sources was more prominent than that of news based content. Again, this reinforces the representative sample's use of Twitter as more of a personal tool than for professional use. However, the journalists from the television sample subgroup did express a higher number of retweets from news based content, as already noted. Retweets help reinforce a user's individual networks; therefore, the more retweets present, the further an individual's prospective network can potentially be extended. This individual responsibility may ironically result in journalists potentially becoming tools for news organisations to expand their audience reach, regardless of the journalist's preferred use for Twitter.

Analysis – Content – Conversation and User Interaction

From the representative sample, conversational tweets were the most dominant content. Conversational based tweets help indicate journalist's meaningful interactions on Twitter and suggest that conversations are the main reason for their use of Twitter. Within the conversational based tweets; personal conversations were more frequent than news related conversations, reinforcing that the representative sample use of Twitter is autonomous and that interaction with external sources is most likely with friends. The data indicated that journalists from the radio subgroup were the highest frequenters of conversational, mainly by Baker Wilson and Whelan. Elevated levels of conversational tweets appear to suggest that journalists are more engaged with the public, as suggested by Spyridou et al. (2013). However, further research would be needed to test this, for example, by looking more closely at who journalists are actually conversing with: a wider public or a narrower group of sources and media professionals.

Screenshots from Strongman's Twitter feed (fig. 1) alongside one of her conversation threads (fig. 2) help illustrate the intricacies of looking at conversations on Twitter. Strongman's example (fig. 1 and fig. 2) show that by just observing the individual users Twitter feed, the context of conversations and replies can be misinterpreted, and is only deciphered by observing the entire conversation thread. Even by observing the whole tweeted conversation, there is no sure way to tell that the users are going to end the conversation or if a tweet gets deleted; this can make the conversation difficult to interpret and can result in misinterpretation of content. Upon review of the content collected it is

hard to determine the relationship with the users the journalists are conversing with on Twitter.

Strongman's example also highlights interactions of a journalist with a member of the public. As the conversation thread continues, Strongman attempts to defuse a situation where a disgruntled user attempts to express his disagreement with journalism practice. Strongman's engagement shows how casual conversations can be, even about her journalism occupation. With the majority of conversation tweets from the representative sample being more personal; it could be anticipated that conversations about news events or journalistic practices would have a more formal approach and vocabulary. Strongman's example helps emphasise that regardless of conversational context, journalists may communicate on Twitter any way they deem appropriate (without knowing their contractual obligations).

Analysis – Personal

The data showed the prominence of personal tweets, which reinforces the point that journalists use Twitter more so for their own personal means, rather than their professional duties. With journalists being more prominent figures in the public sphere, their online presence is more likely to come under harsher judgment, and it is therefore implied that journalists should be more aware of what content they post and share on social media. However, the data suggest that care with content is not the case. This leads to several possible explanations for their personal content; personal content is a means to connect

and build relationships or networks with wider audiences, construct a personal brand, and allows journalists to appear like ordinary people by individuals in the public sphere (Molyneux 2014).

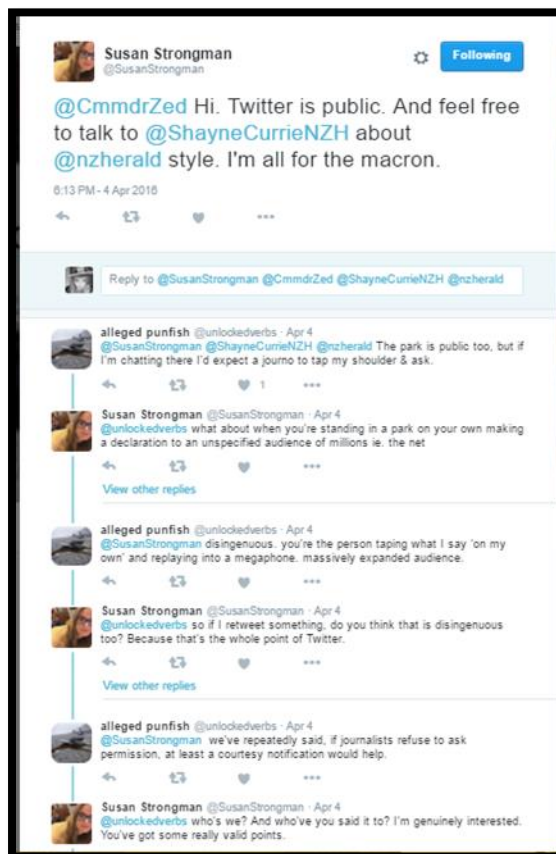


Figure 1

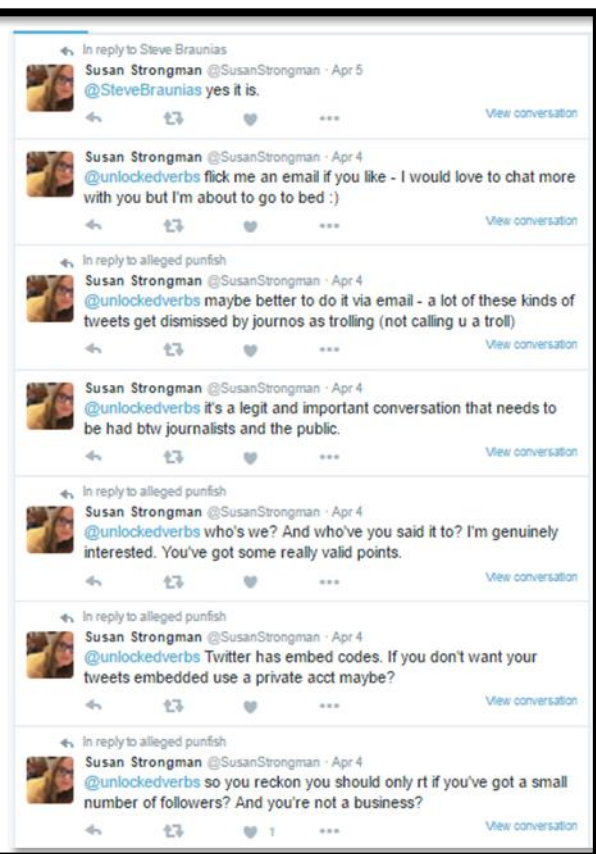


Figure 2

A fundamental aspect of social media is to construct networks. Twitter's ability to allow users to access a multitude of other user's feeds means that making connections and building networks are extremely convenient. For journalists, this allows them to build networks within social spheres that extend beyond their occupation, and allows journalists to portray themselves outside of the title 'journalist.' It potentially means that journalists

can step away from being defined by their profession, and build their identity around other areas of interest. Furthermore, journalist's ability to portray themselves in an alternate context allows them to become more relatable to different audiences. The capacity to connect more with different audiences can, therefore, be seen as supplementing their journalistic duties and provide a more convenient, fast, and efficient way to access specific networks. Audiences can obtain news content from alternate and more mainstream sources; therefore, there needs to be more benefit from following journalists over following specific news feeds. Developing an online reputation via personal content could be key in developing impressionable relationships (Vobic and Milosevic 2014, and O'Sullivan and Heinonen 2008). An example of this can be seen in Strongman's screenshot (fig. 3) as she frequently tweets about her cat. As cats are a popular internet topic, Strongman has the potential to be able to relate more to not only cat owners but those who understand the significance of cats online.



Figure 3

Personal content leads to ideas around the personal brand and the representation of oneself on social media. The elevated level of personal content may not initially be relevant, but it does provide online representations of more well-known members of society. In turn, this expands on ideas around personal branding and the complexes around making news content more relatable to a wider audience. By developing a prominent reputation, journalists generate content that is more relatable to followers and in a format, that online audience are more adapted to consuming; in theory, meaning that journalists who post and share more personal or perceptive content over news content will be more popular and therefore have more followers and more network capabilities. Personalised content also relates to Veenstra et al. and helps support the idea that there is a restriction on ideologies around being professional (2014). Additionally, the value of personal content is in the fact that it helps position journalists as pseudo-celebrity and allows them to provide audiences with more relatable content.

Appleby's, Irwin's, and Robson's screenshots (fig. 4, 5, and 6) help demonstrate the execution of personal content and branding. The journalists tweet about the television show *The Bachelor NZ* (fig. 4, 5, and 6), where followers can interact and relate to both journalist's tweets. The ability to observe and provide instant commentary alongside a nationally well-known television show helps paint Appleby, Irwin, and Robson as a regular citizen interacting with popular media content. This allows them to develop their individual brands and reputations away from journalistic identities. Rather than treating *The Bachelor NZ* like a potential news story or approaching it with formal language, the journalists seem to be facilitating interaction and providing personal opinions by posting rhetorical questions,

hashtags, sassy comments, and exaggerated spelling. Although this can be perceived as promoting content on behalf an employer, this is not openly mentioned.

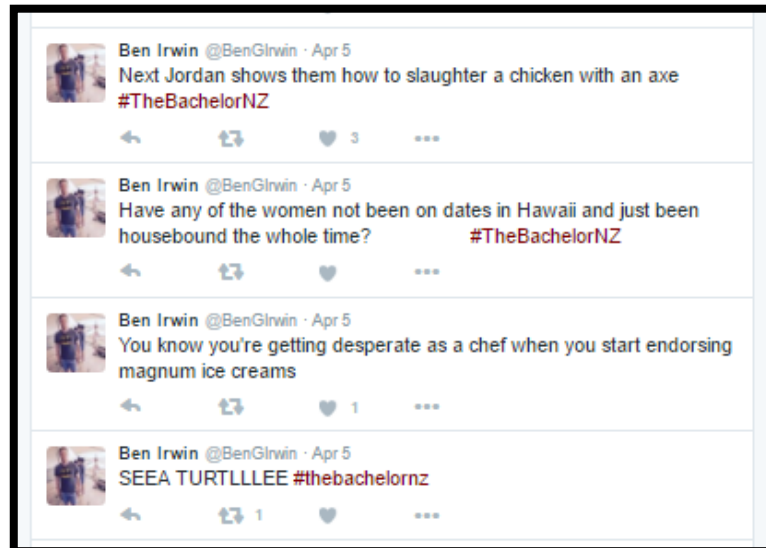


Figure 4

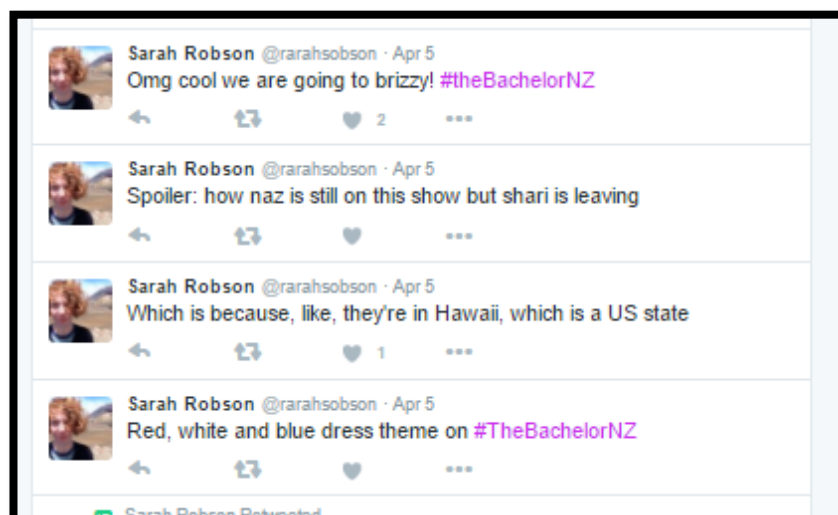


Figure 5



Figure 6

Analysis – Commentary Supplementary and Commentary opinion

During the data collection commentary supplement and commentary opinion was used to code content that mentioned a news event, but not in a formal or newsworthy manner. However, content around news events became more clouded, difficult to define and code as journalists would talk around news events or relate the events to themselves.

Although commentary supplement and commentary opinion were as frequent as the other forms of content, there were some interesting examples where journalists crossed over content and tweeted opinions and comments around the news event rather than the event itself.

Abstaining from bias and maintaining objectivity when reporting is paramount for successfully communicating news events; However, social media allows journalists to step away from journalistic norms. The data found that while content about the news was more dominant than commentary based content, the presence of the latter was significant enough to be worthy of analysis. For example, Cook's screenshot (fig. 7) reinforces the suggestion that New Zealand journalists produce content that interests them rather than their occupational duties. Cook tweets around the subject; the release of New Zealand's bank notes as the primary news event. However, Cook is more interested in documenting the live falcon at the event and openly admits to her followers that they should go to news sites for actual updates on the news event. Cook is tweeting about what interests her, and not for the benefit of her followers.



Figure 7

Chang's Twitter feed provides a similar example. Chang was in Fiji, covering weather based events during the data collection period. Chang's tweets exhibit a kind of 'first hand' account of events, where he can produce a raw image of events, rather than an edited news story. It is Chang's content (fig. 8 and 9) that help shows how he is supplementing the news

story by providing a kind of 'behind the scenes' to the day's events, and openly expressing his fear about the situation. Chang's raw account helps underline modern journalism practices and suggests that journalists should provide more than just the facts of the news to cover an event. The application of passionate reporting could suggest that journalists become more relatable considering more dramatic news events.



Figure 8



Figure 9

Analysis – About and Around The Job

Similar to posting content around a news event, posting content on and about the job was evident in the data collection. Instead of journalists portraying themselves in a formal and professional manner, there is evidence to suggest the portrayal of journalists is shifting to a more relaxed and open way of representing themselves. Examples from Appleby, Baker Wilson, and Irwin help show this informal approach to talking about journalism and provide a ‘behind the scenes’ feel to newsroom practices. The access social media provides audiences with removes the mystery of the newsroom and invites them to feel a part of, or witness to, the construction of news and the people behind it. This representation helps illustrate the characteristics of a modern journalist and suggests that the title of a journalist might need to be redefined. The examples collected from the data seem to position journalists as content creators and personalities and share more honest and informal content. It gives the way audiences receive the news and news related content a personal touch. Again here, this supports arguments made by Lasorsa et al. (2012) with the normalisation of news content. Further arguments can be developed around how journalists choose to separate themselves from the news content.

Appleby’s and Baker Wilson’s example (fig. 10 and 11), help suggest that journalists openly share experiences or talk about their work life, and give an insight or “behind the scene” look at newsroom antics. Evidence of personal content and an audience’s ability to connect with journalist helps lift any hierarchy veil around journalism, making journalists more relatable and accessible to their audience. Appleby’s example shows a standard selfie with a cup of coffee, and Baker Wilson’s example shows him sharing details of his co-

worker's junk food binge; two daily indulgences to which a significant portion of followers can relate too. It can be understood that coffee is a morning requirement for some occupations, and the occasion junk food binge is a guilty pleasure many people are familiar with. The sharing of daily experiences helps frame journalists as relatable via mutual understandings.



Figure 10



Figure 11

Irwin's satirical tweet (fig. 12) positions *Newshub* journalists in a family portrait style image. This is reflective of popular internet memes where family portraits are mocked for their awkwardness. Aside from the comical nature of the tweet, this image gives the impression that the team at *Newshub* are more than journalists; they are a family, and by sharing this idea of a family dynamic it is something all followers can relate to or understand. Irwin's tweet (fig. 12), provides that intimate insight into the *Newshub* newsroom and helps establish a sense of belonging where followers feel like know the journalists on a personal level.



Figure 12

Analysis – News Content

The primary content expected from journalists are the news; However, as the data has illustrated this is not the case. The representative sample does not seem to place a priority on the news; rather it is a smaller aspect of their tweeting habits. News content does not follow a set format on Twitter and can appear in varying styles and combinations

of links, images, and videos. It is to be expected that a significant portion of news content may originate from retweets from governing news organisations (Barnard 2014, and Boczkowski 2009), but this research indicates that journalists from the representative sample produce and share snippets of news content suitable for Twitter's format, and remaining within the bounds of newsworthiness.

From the representative sample, some journalists did demonstrate a preference for more news-based content; Searle's Twitter feed (fig.13) showed higher levels of news content as well as surrounding commentary, as many tweets from Searle were coded newsworthy as they pertained to relevant facts and information about horse racing. Searle's feed appears more visually uniform, and is not as appealing compared to other journalists; it could be argued that this is a result from Searle only posting and sharing horse racing content. It appears that Searle follows a more traditional format, as there are not visual or written cues to indicate personality. Due to Searle's lack of personalisation and range of content, his Twitter feed suggests that his inability to post and share not only non-news content but varied news content disconnects him with a wider audience preventing social network growth. Searle's Twitter feed provides an alternative path of how a journalist may use Twitter by falling back on traditional norms; in retrospect, Searle's Twitter feed is what may be anticipated from journalists on Twitter.

Sherman's Twitter (fig. 14) serves as an opposite to Searle's as it helps illustrate a varying degree of news content. Sherman is primarily a political reporter; however, she posts from different political perspectives and stories and incorporates images, links, and

videos. The ability to post varying degrees of content helps make news content more consumable as it does not present a predictable pattern of information. It also helps that Sherman can add a personal element around political news content, (fig. 14 and 15) illustrates her reactions to a bill being passed in parliament. Twitter allows Sherman to share news content objectively and express herself in a more personal capacity at the same time. The ability to report objectively and provide opinion highlights with a slight shift in journalism, as it may be perceived that having a personal element to supplement the news is an alternate way the aid in preventing bias in reporting.

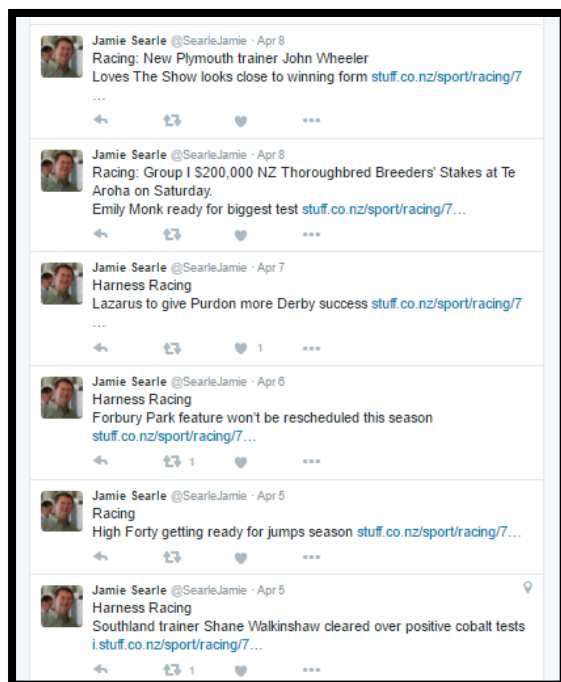


Figure 13

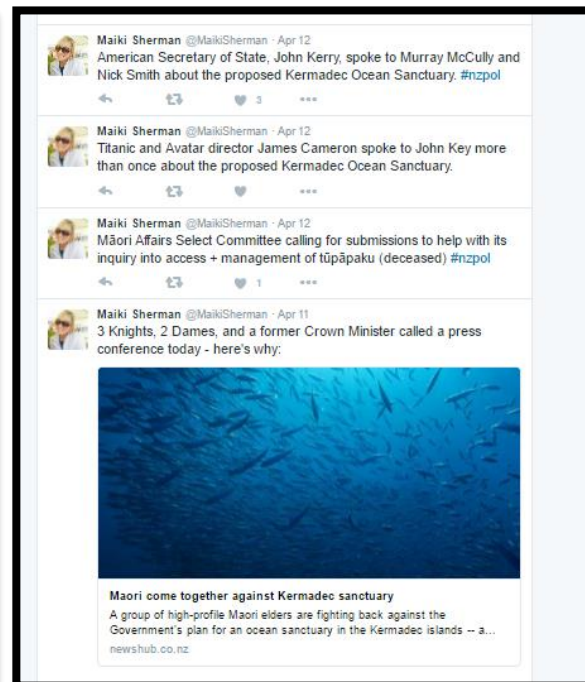


Figure 14



Figure 15

Analysis – News Values

News Values were applied to the data to help categorise news content, and to assist in determining what types of news events are more prominent on Twitter. News values help indicate content preferences and might be able to suggest what values journalists prioritise from content surrounding news events; as in commentary or opinion related content. The dominant news values present in the representative sample were: relevant news, bad news stories, and referencing power of the elite. The subordinate news values were: good news stories, celebrity news, other or non-applicable news, and newspaper agenda.

The leading news value was relevant news, which is characterised by the contents ability to be influenced by or familiar to a preconceived audience. The strong amount of 'relevant' news tweets could reflect New Zealand's 'two degrees of separation'; being a smaller nation New Zealand's communities are more close knit, resulting in a higher demand for a more local level of content. Being in closer proximity to local communities could be suggested that New Zealand journalists within the representative sample anticipate that their prospectus audiences are at the local level. The high level of relevant news stories could also be pinned down to the journalists covering local events and presenting content only tailored for a contemporary audience, such as Searle and his racing reports. This helps indicate that not all journalists tweet all news content; rather this study suggests that journalist share, create and communicate content that is relevant to them on a more personal level. One limitation to these assumptions is that the audience or followers of the journalists in the representative sample is undefinable; there could be high levels of colleagues or friends who are the followers. Thus the audience is not preconceived of traditional news texts and modern social media networks. This reinforces the suggestion that journalists post content that is of relevance to themselves.

Referencing the power of the elite was also a prominent news value. From the representative sample tweets, prominent references included: Mockery of other nations and their political figures, personal details of New Zealand leading politicians, and war and conflict content. The high number of referencing the power of the elite news content could be reflective of journalism's relationship with the political sphere; however, considering social media referencing the power of the elite could be a result of journalists following

global news trends. The absence of newspaper agenda is due to the nature of the medium of Twitter. Journalists from the representative sample do not seem to be under any obligation to be representative of their individual governing news organisation.

New Zealand journalist's ability to openly discuss and tweet about their work and workplace environment helps to support transparency within the news cycle and promotes the normalisation of using social media as a newsroom practice (Lasorsa et al. 2012). While this is not deemed news, it provides an alternate perception to the news process. Much like how YouTubers make a behind the scenes to their videos, the ability to follow journalists and gain this alternate external interpretation of news events provides a unique 'user experience' and allows journalists to become more transparent. This aspect of the news process, while unprocessed provides a raw interpretation of events. This could become an Achilles heel to journalism, but the bigger picture is; if multiple journalists are providing information to some degree, it allows followers to paint their own interpretation of the news as they have more access to a myriad of sources. Ideally, this would result in more informed audiences. (However, the credibility of journalists might be weakened once audiences notice tweets of cats alongside tweets of politics).

Purposive Sample

Unlike the representative sample, the subjects in the purposive sample are news organisations. As discussed in the literature review (Barnard 2014 and Hermida 2010), they are likely to be more commercially strategic with their content as they are established

brands with reputations in New Zealand society. The six news organisations sampled produced a combined total of 4,252 tweets over a 14-day time period. Out of those tweets, 88.50% contained news content. The analysis that follows is not systematic enough to be able to generate broad generalisations, but it does demonstrate some differences between each news outlet, which may be attributed to their form of creating and disseminating news content.

Analysis – Retweets, Conversations, and Meaningful Engagement

The primary content of the purposive sample is news. Retweets were not significant in the data collected, which helps suggest that there is a strong preference to generate and share independently created content. The data showed that approximately 6.23% of the content on news organisations Twitter feeds were retweets, compared to the 93.77% that can be considered as user generated content. However, the small amount of retweeting should not be read as suggesting that news organisations gathered information online and repackaged it for their own means. There were a few examples of news organisations retweeting content from external sources, but much of retweets came from alternative accounts owned by or associated with the same news organisation. For example, *Stuff.co.nz* has multiple Twitter accounts to cover different regions, with different news content. The creation of alternative accounts allows other users and followers to tailor their newsfeed to concentrate on one category of content while still following the same news outlet. This results in followers being able to engage with one type of content, meaning that news organisations do not have to alter their content to broaden their audience reach.

Studying the degree of meaningful engagement allows us to analyse how news organisations are using Twitter to communicate and interact with followers and prospective audiences. Conversations were not significantly evident as the data showed less than 1% (0.89%) of content on news organisations Twitter feeds were tagged as or presented as a part of a conversation. However, from the data collected, there are some smaller observable conversations that give an indication of what they tend to be used for. Most significantly, *Newshub's* example (fig. 16) illustrates that conversations were used by some followers as a way to be more critical about the presentation or representation of news content on Twitter, rather than be used to contribute to the news process or news content. Some followers of *Newshub* expressed their dismay at the mini news format that provides 'snapshots of news briefs,' rather than links to the full articles. While those comments cannot be taken as representative, they provide both the media producer and the analyst some insight into followers and wider audience expectations of news organisations on Twitter. *Newshub's* approach to tweeting news in a 'snapshot' format could be perceived as preserving traditional news practices where timeliness is given strong emphasis. Rather than only pre-packaging news content into a single link, *Newshub* provided a way for followers to have access to real-time updates. It was this packaging question rather than content that users most engaged within conversations on the *Newshub* account. For example, the comments in Figure 16 represent conversation in the form of complaint or feedback, rather than a participatory debate about a news event or issue.

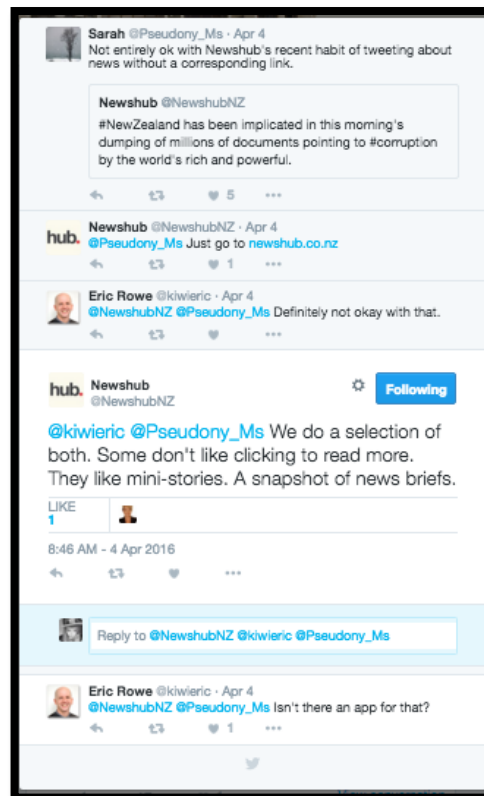


Figure 16

Twitter is set up to promote two-way and accessible communication. It is a way of instantly accessing the microphone for individual citizens. However, the data on the minimal levels of engagement do not support this interpretation on the use of Twitter; thus, it could be suggested that followers are not virtually interactive with the news organisation on Twitter. A handful of conversation tweets from *Stuff.co.nz* and the *New Zealand Herald* indicate that conversation was used to thank followers and correct errors in the content of the tweet or news article, but data around this is not strong enough to make a more substantive analysis. The small amount of engagement data also provides little evidence that news organisations use discussions about their stories on Twitter as a means to source content for their own means; at best it demonstrates the capability of being able to engage

with news organisations on social media platforms and helps reinforce that followers can hold the news organisation accountable for the content they produce (the so-called fifth estate role). The limited data around conversational tweets shows that Twitter does not appear to be a tool for participation or engagement in New Zealand news media.

Analysis – Promotions, and Alternatively Packaged Content

There is strong evidence that Twitter is being used as a promotional tool by news organisations. The use of social media to promote businesses is not a foreign concept. News organisations' use of Twitter as a promotional tool follows the lines of a cross-content promotion. Predominantly seen in the broadcast-based news organisation, promoting radio or television shows outside of the news genre alongside news shows was present. Conversely, print-based news organisations did not appear to promote the sale of their physical product, newspapers. News organisations have a lot of their content available and streaming online, making the share-ability and access to content more flexible.

Self-promotion can appear repetitive and spam-like, and so undermines the core relationship of providing an appealing and useful news service. *Newshub* used retweets as a way of promotion, without it becoming highly repetitive. By retweeting the evening news presenters, *Newshub* can simultaneously promote its broadcast content and front line employees. The relaxed and more informal language used by journalists and shared by the news organisation positions their Twitter feeds as more relatable content. By providing a more humanised element to the news process, it makes the process of reporting the news a

shared experience. Thus, it could be suggested that followers and audiences will feel more invested in the news and therefore more likely to view, click, or read more about the story. Brautovic et al. (2013) suggest that researchers are likely to find tweeted content about the job in most data, though discuss these sorts of tweets more in terms of transparency and accountability, rather than relatability to audiences and followers (2013).

Within the content collected, *RadioLIVE* provided an example of alternatively packaged content. This was done by producing news content in a 'zine' like format; while the content was news, the execution, and publication was not. *RadioLIVE* shares and promotes '*5 things you need to know today*' followed by a series of hashtags, which strongly resembles that of content found on *Snapchat Stories* or *Buzzfeed*.¹ Using a title or tagline like '*5 things you need to know today*' positions the content in a more consumable and shareable format, making it more inviting to readers looking for a quick news fix rather than a long story. It appeals in terms of instant gratification. The more compact packaging of news also makes it easier for followers to share and engage with the content. (The reason why this is not considered clickbait is because clickbait requires the title to be misleading or entirely different to the content).

Analysis - Frequency and volume, Headline Structure, Visual Cues and Design

The volume of tweets collected in this research helps emphasise the frequency of tweeting content. As the data has illustrated, the purposive sample produced a total of

¹ *RadioLive* was the only outlet in your sample to post tweets in this format.

4,252 tweets in a fortnight; that averages out at 12.64 tweets an hour, and 303.36 tweets a day, across six news outlets. That amounts to about two tweets an hour per news organisation.

Frequency, Volume, and Repetition

Frequency, volume, and repetition are social media application; they often come packaged together and are routinely seen as key aspects of successfully using social media. The main concerns raised in this study are that with frequency and volume comes potential limitations on accuracy and breaches of other journalistic obligations. The immediate nature of social media may place a strain on the accuracy of the news content and influence the decision-making process within the news cycle (Craig 2011); resulting in misrepresentation, inconsistent content, and grammatical errors. Journalistic obligations to the truth also become impaired, because it becomes hard to see *how* journalists can be expected to produce objective and accurate news content in such immediate and demanding time frames. One side effect of the large volume of tweets is that mistakes and inaccuracies can easily be overlooked. Also, the arduous task of going back through hundreds of tweets to find errors is extremely time-consuming. Additionally, Twitter does not allow users to edit tweets. Repetition does have similar implications to frequency and volume, except it has the added element of repeat exposure to the same risks to quality.

The data demonstrate the frequency and volume of tweets, while Figures 17, 18, and 19 illustrate the level of repetition. The screen shots from *Stuff.co.nz* and *New Zealand*

Herald Twitter feeds illustrate how repetition looks in practice. Figures 17, 18, and 19 shows repeat exposure to the same news article, but with different text, however, the use of the same image makes it appear as if it is the same article and the same content being posted again and again. This repetition of perceived similar content may come across as spam posting, which can be seen as unprofessional in that it potentially undermines the new and fresh aspect of news content. Repeat exposure makes it appear as though news organisations are not coordinated and are spamming unnecessary content.

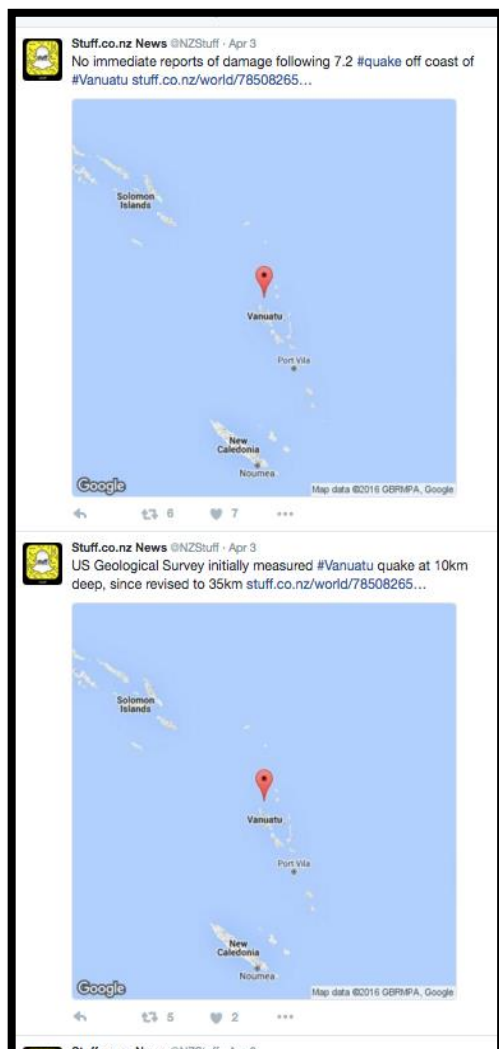


Figure 17



Figure 18

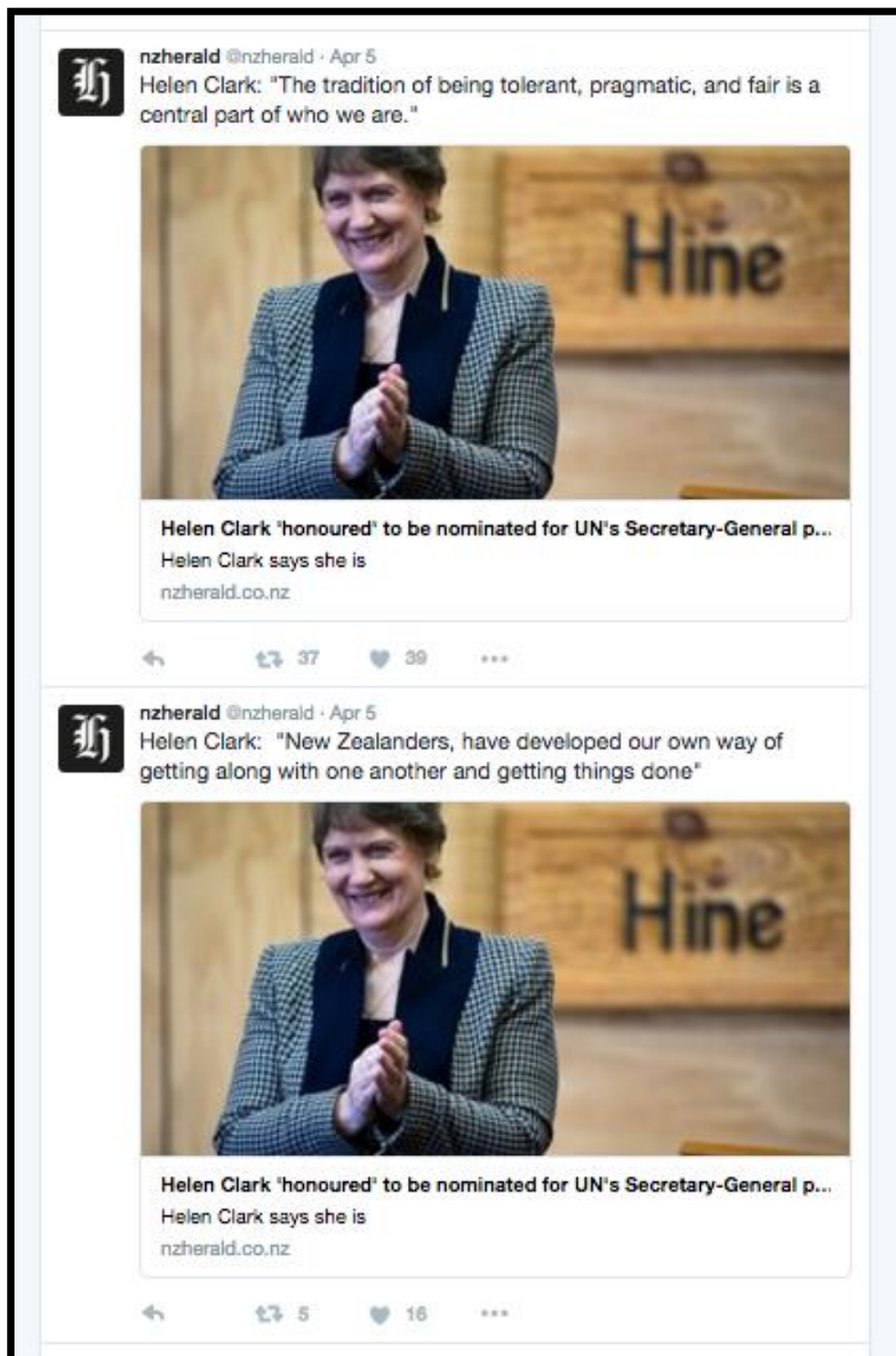


Figure 19

Headline Structure, Visual Cues, and Design

Adaptations of headline or text structure, visual framing, and design of the tweeted content allow users to communicate better on social media platforms. The content produced by the news organisations do have to combat that of other organisations and media outlets, so it makes sense that the news organisation content will be produced in a manner that will attract a larger audience, stand out from competitors content, stand out from other various content and draw audiences or followers away from social media streams onto their web forums.

Headlines and Text

The structuring of the text in a headline or tweet helps set the tone for the content and provides a summary. Whatever format of news, social or other, the textual framing of a tweet has the potential to help boost audience interaction, followers, and clicks. The text used to frame a story also has the potential to alter the perception of the content. The text in the tweeted content is analysed here largely as if it was a headline, that is, analysed in terms of headline conventions. Headlines are the main entrance point into a news story, where the text indicates the nature of the article. The term “Headlinesese” has been used to help describe the structure and trends of writing headlines, where abbreviations and short forms of text are used. In some aspects, headlines can be defined in terms of a separate set of grammatical and vocabulary rules, and these are evident in the tweets collected in this research and should be evident in the headlines of the links tweeted. The reason why headlines are important and recognised in this research is that headlines are the first reference point for the content and its connotative representation. Images could be

considered the first reference point, but it is common for news organisations to use stock images and as illustrated above to use the same images repetitively.

The data showed a variety of text structures, including specific phrasing, word selection, use of common or conversational language, informal language, posing questions, rhetorical questions, offensive statements, top 5 or top 10 lists, and quotes. The language used is reflective of that found in leading social media producers such as *Buzzfeed*. These tactics are similar to those found in magazines and can be defined as zine elements. The concept behind zine elements is packaging and presenting content in a way that will draw in readers as it preys on an audience's curiosity and it allows followers to develop and perceive the content as more easily consumable. The following are tweets collected that help exemplify the use of text:

“AUDIO: @PaulHenryShow '5 things you need to know today' #CYF #CERA
#ChchRebuild #StKents #SweeneyTodd #FoodLabelling
[http://www.radiolive.co.nz/Paul-Henrys-5-things-you-need-to-know-today-Friday-8th-April-2016/tabid/506/articleID/118059/Default.aspx ...](http://www.radiolive.co.nz/Paul-Henrys-5-things-you-need-to-know-today-Friday-8th-April-2016/tabid/506/articleID/118059/Default.aspx)”
-RadioLIVE tweeted, 8th April 2016

Use of headline-style text to frame the article or content gives readers, audiences or followers an immediate impression of the content of the article. In short, text and the framing of text carry both connotative and denotative meanings. Expanding on these elements, the use of text can suggest representations of click bait. Clickbait is an emergent content format, where the title or tagline is misleading and does not match the internal content. However, the examples lean more towards sensational and stylised content rather than clickbait tactics and appear to rely on formats that are repeatable.

Visual Cues, Graphic Design, And Constructed Content

Twitter generally allows unrestricted access to a range of users' content. The content produced by social media users comes presented on metaphorical 'walls.' When looking at a Twitter feed, most users are confronted with a 'wall' of text, images, links, GIF's, hashtags and emoji's, which all compete with one another for attention. There are visual aspects seen in this research that quantitative analysis of the data does not represent thoroughly; this is the overall visual presentation of the news organisation Twitter feed and the confronting nature of the 'walls' of content. Two opposite examples pulled from the research (Figures 20 and 21) help illustrate the presentation of news content.

Figure 20 from *Newshub's* Twitter feed has taken an alternative approach to tweeting and removed the stimuli of links, videos, and images. Instead, they post snippets of news content. This minimalistic approach to packaging the news has the potential to be perceived as a non-conventional way of producing news content; instead of posting a complete news package (headline, by-line, image or video, and structured article). In comparison Figure 21 from the *New Zealand Herald* produces a plethora of stimuli, which is the norm for the news organisations' Twitter feed. The number of stimuli on the Twitter feeds connotes the zine like elements as previously discussed. The prevalence of zine elements beyond individual tweets suggests that news content might not be perceived as seriously as it should be. These matters of the quality of the relationship between users and producers are something that the data cannot entirely capture as it steps outside the daily interaction with news organisations' Twitter feeds. But we should be aware that social

media users are continuously exposed to this high stimulus but might not register that they are consuming alternatively packaged on news content.



Figure 20



Figure 21

The data showed evidence of combined elements of text and visuals to form a stylised image, reminiscent of a pull quote. During the data collection period, *Stuff.co.nz* started to produce news content that is graphically similar to content shared by organisations such as *Buzzfeed*. The use of graphic design to reformat news content into a more consumable product for social media could be considered an innovation in news. Social platforms favour the packaging of news content into a more shareable context into a form that makes news content stand out from other content, as all content is in competition with all other content. Figure 22 and 23 shows two examples from *Stuff.co.nz* where the image has a transparent overlay featuring a quote in white text, which connotes a similar type of content seen on other social media platforms. The purpose for this seems to be more for marketing purposes; the capacity to share content, while cheating Twitter's character limit, and therefore share the news organisations as a brand, is a great marketing strategy to broaden audience reach.



Figure 22



Figure 23

Analysis – News Content and News Values

Twitter's limited character count means that news should be packaged in a more compact manner, which make it a challenge to attract and communicate content to audiences at times. News values as defined by O'Neill and Harcup (2001) were employed in the research process to help establish priorities in news content. As the data demonstrated, much of the news choice was able to be represented by at least one news value, but a few were unable to be represented. These tended to be tweets that had click bait-style tendencies. Since the practices that are summed up in news value lists were established before the emergence of social media, it was anticipated that there would be some variation of content to suit the needs of social media platforms better. The news values list used to code news based content was weakest in accounting for social media-originated content. News values are core criteria to this research as they help show the priorities in

news content, essentially helping shape the news environment. As the data showed, much of the data in the purposive sample drew on the following news values: relevance stories, bad news stories, and entertainment news stories. a minority drew on the following news values: newspaper agenda, good news stories, and follow-up news stories.

Relevance was the most prominent value. This was defined as “Stories about issues, groups and nations perceived to be relevant to the audience” (O’Neill and Harcup 2001: 279); these were stories indicative of New Zealand social spheres. With New Zealand having a smaller population, the bar for potential events being regarded as relevant news stories is low, as there is a higher likelihood of that event affecting a wider portion of the New Zealand population. A closer look at the collected tweets shows relevance news stories are at a national level and encourage engagement of followers in which the news content is disseminated. The biggest contributors to Relevance news stories is political and sports-related content; for example, stories about recent sporting matches, competitions, and fixtures at both national and local levels, changes in political policies or laws, and propositions that will impact the general population. Some examples are:

“Chiefs masterclass in Canberra leaves ACT Brumbies in their dust
<http://dlvr.it/Ky15tV> “
- Stuff.co.nz, tweeted April 3rd, 2016

“Need to know: New banknotes. <http://nzh.nu/10ueR2>”
-NZ Herald, tweeted April 10th 2016

“Experts push for tax on sugary drinks
[http://www.newstalkzb.co.nz/news/health/experts-push-for-tax-on-sugary-drinks/.](http://www.newstalkzb.co.nz/news/health/experts-push-for-tax-on-sugary-drinks/)”
-NewstalkZB, tweeted April 4th, 2016

“Workers get more say under new workplace rules <https://www.tvnz.co.nz/one-news/new-zealand/workers-get-more-say-under-new-workplace-rules> ...”
-One News, tweeted April 3rd, 2016

there can be an argument made that some sports-related news stories should be coded as a reference to the elite, celebrity or entertainment news values. it is the wording of the tweet that has led to them being coded in terms of relevance, as the initial focus of the content is argued to related to this news value. as mentioned, relevance means that the content is intended for a predictable and specific audience, and it is the consideration of the impact of the content on a given portion of that audience which helps determine the application of the relevance news value. the examples of relevance tweets (above) show how the much content is selected and presented to impact a given portion of New Zealand society.

Another reason why relevance news stories are prominent is due to repetition (as mentioned above). The repetition of tweets might be argued to skew the overall data, but the repetition itself demonstrates the priorities of the news organisation. Relevance also highlights the high levels of community-based news, framed as human interest stories; their stories are more likely to impact a community rather than a population. Analysis of news values gives insight into the rationale behind why this event or story was selected, and then the framing for a preconceived audience: in this research the New Zealand public sphere.

Bad news was the second most frequently found news value in the data. Bad news stories have a more limited range with the majority of the bad news referencing accidents,

petty crimes, and international criminal activities. O'Neill and Harcup define bad news content as "stories with a particularly negative overtone, such as conflict or tragedy" (2001: 279). The prominence of bad news stories as outlined by O'Neill and Harcup (2001) suggests that bad news should apply to events that affect the wider community on a more global scale. the data collected did present a few cases of international conflict and tragedy, but the examples below help illustrate the most general focus of bad news stories:

"Three arrested after drugs found during raid at gang headquarters
<http://nzh.nu/4mKkoC>."

-NZ Herald, tweeted 16th April 2016

"Teen road death - pair questioned <http://dlvr.it/KydRGg>."

-Stuff.co.nz, tweeted 4th April 2016

.@WellingtonZoo's Sam the chimpanzee dies <http://bit.ly/1RMJhbK>

- Newshub, tweeted 6th April 2016

It can be argued that bad news stories should be shared with or disseminated to the public on the grounds that it is in the public's best interests to be aware of these stories so that individuals and society can adapt to the issues and events. Additionally, bad news appeals to readers because there is a level of drama and excitement. The text is often paired with pictures that connote a sense of emergency or public sphere significance. Figure 24 depicts a tweet coded as bad news, featuring an image of a police vehicle. By using an image of an emergency vehicle, it helps present to an audience that this tweet is of importance, and provides connotations of a disruption to the social fabric. Bad news stories can also act as Public Service Announcements (PSA) alerting the public to events that may be cause for alarm, such as a hostage situation, school lockdown, or natural disaster.



Figure 24

Entertainment news permeated news organisations' Twitter feeds and provided a soft contrast to a large number of serious or bad news stories. Entertainment news is defined as "stories concerning sex, show business, human interest, animals, an unfolding drama, or offering opportunities for humorous treatment, entertaining photographs or witty headlines" (O'Neill and Harcup 2001: 279). With the data reflecting higher levels of entertainment content, it demonstrates a sense of priority from the news organisations to produce content that is perceived as sensational or soft news stories. What the data does not show is the types of content and framing of that content that contribute to the news values. In the case of entertainment news, examples include:

"Spotted: Driver's bad attempt to squeeze into carpark
<http://nzh.nu/10ezSw>."

-NZ Herald, tweeted 4th April 2016

"There's a new buzz word being used to describe a type of obesity – TOF."

-Newshub, tweeted 13th April 2016

“Kylie Jenner yells at a fan who got too close <http://dlvr.it/Kyjjq5> “
-Stuff.co.nz tweeted 4th April 2016

Contributing to the high level of entertainment news could be an increase in the prevalence of celebrity culture more generally in media. But social media has allowed journalists to build, reproduce and re-orchestrate entertainment news content, due to the immediate and high level of access. Furthermore, softer and sensationalistic news stories appeal to audiences who are more socially orientated, and thrive on gossip, fashion trends, or content that will help establish and build relationships. Another factor that helps boost the number of Entertainment related content is the ability to share or discuss content that the news organisation’s parent company itself has created. One prominent example is *Newshub*’s televised series *The Bachelor*:

“.@TheBachelorNZ: Episode 11 recap <http://bit.ly/1TNzgjs>.”
-Newshub, tweeted April 12th, 2016

The Bachelor is a reality television format that has been common in mainstream media channels in the past. As Mediaworks owns the network *Newshub* airs on, stories on these kinds of the show are a form of cross-promotion, in which a news based program shares another non-news program. It is harder to code for this type of tweet as it is both promotes other content and reflects on the program's events, deeming it to a degree newsworthy. The evidence of strong entertainment news values also points to news organisations not being able to ignore more sensationalised content resulting in an acceptance that entertainment based news content is a significant portion of the news sphere.

Weak News Values

The news values that were not as prominent in the data were newspaper or news organisation agenda, good news stories, and follow-up. Newspaper agenda or news organisation agenda was not present which could be due to the nature of the medium where the news is shared or disseminated. The key issue with the lack of these news values extends from the news values originated from the United Kingdom where newspapers often pursue campaigns and tabloid-like articles. The social structures and environment from which the content is disseminated in can be reflective of the agenda of the news organisation. As such, news organisations in New Zealand do not appear to place importance on their own agenda, over more relevant news content. Alternatively, the time frame from which the data was collected fell when there was no pre-planned promotion. The evidence of newspaper agenda in the data is minimal and reflects more so events in the media realm, that if they were to happen in any other industry would most likely not be reported or given as much attention as it should.

The lack of good news stories might not be due to a lack of news content, rather the angle and framing of the story to draw in more attention to negative or alternate aspects of the news event. As the news values are applied based on the initial connotations of the image, text, and overall content, it is possible that some of the bad news, entertainment or surprise news values could also have been categorised as good news, if the underlying story is emphasised more than the presentation. Follow-up news stories were not as frequent as anticipated, and the data showed that instead of following up on a story, news organisations would just repetitively expose the same article (as mentioned above). Follow-

up news stories were impacted by the social media's capacity to on the spot edit or adjust content. Follow up content is more applicable to news formats that rely on a weekly or daily routines such as television or the press. Consistent updates handicap the ability to view follow up stories on social media, as the content just becomes a more edited version of the original. As previously mentioned, the more immediate news cycle plays a major role here. The ability to instantly follow up or edit news content could grant news organisations both great commercial interests in terms of advertising and promotion, and being perceived as timely as a frontline news producer.

The Relationship Between the Representative Sample and the Purposive Sample

The data depicted the relationship between the representative sample and the purposive sample to be minimal, and while they may operate in the same public sphere, they appear to act independently. There were a few instances where news organisations may have influenced an individual journalist's post on Twitter, such as with the promotion of *The Bachelor NZ* and some retweets from a journalist's employer. There was no indication to suggest that either sample group was obligated to promote or acknowledge each other. Regardless of the relationship, there were a few points that help demonstrate the similarities and differences between the two sample groups.

There are two key similarities between the representative sample and the purposive sample: the variations of content types (a mixture of visual, audio, links, and text), and the similar representation of news values including the prominence of the relevance value. The

news values help to display similarities as it suggests that both sample groups have the same priorities in terms of news content. The strong representation of the relevance value helps to reinforce that there is a similar treatment to news content and that while the two sample groups act independently, their professional roles are intertwined.

The differences between the representative sample and the purposive sample are more prominent than the similarities. The primary difference is that the representative sample includes more raw and personal content, while the purposive sample has more commercial content. Furthermore, the dominance of the purposive sample's news content helped to reveal the journalists in the representative sample as more relatable and transparent.

DISCUSSION

The central question for this research is; what content do New Zealand news journalists and news organisations produce on Twitter? This study explored content posted on Twitter to gauge an understanding of what New Zealand journalists and newsrooms are disseminating on Twitter and how much of that content is news or news related.

Answering the Research Question

As the research question is open ended, the questions are answered to some degree. The data collection showed that journalists use Twitter in a myriad of ways, and is not limited to either personal or commercial means. In short journalists' content on Twitter is more like what you would expect from any other user. Comparatively, news organisation's use of Twitter is different. News organisations use Twitter as a news publishing platform, but not all news organisations treat Twitter the same.

This study's findings support the first hypothesis that New Zealand news journalists on Twitter would produce a mixture of personal and professional content - journalists offered more insight into their private lives than news content, and there was more emphasis on personal representation over news related content. The second hypothesis was that New Zealand news organisations on Twitter would demonstrate a dispersed array of news values, and would be stricter with the types of content present on their Twitter feeds. Additionally, news organisations managed to demonstrate a wide array of news values helping to highlight priorities in news content.

Changes in the Norms, Practices, and Routines Considering Social Media

As past literature suggests norms and routines around journalistic practices are changing (Steensen and Ahva 2015). The exact causes and correlations of these changes are difficult to determine, but as this research helps to show; social media is an influential aspect of the future of journalism norms and routines. Previous research has suggested that social media's influence on journalism has a significant impact on traditional journalistic criteria such as non-partisanship (Brautovic 2013, Lasorsa et al. 2012), gatekeeping (Brautovic et al 2013, Lasorsa et al. 2012), transparency (Brautovic 2013, Lasorsa et al. 2012, Hedman 2016), journalism as a public service (Ahva 2015, Deuze 2005, Hermida 2010), and the flow of information (Brandtzaeg 2016, Hermida 2010, Lee 2009). Expanding on these are iconic studies that academically establish journalism: Kovach and Rosenstiel's (2007) *Elements of Journalism*, and Galtung and Ruge (followed by O'Neill and Harcup 2001 and 2016) *News Values*. This research looked at the content produced on Twitter as a measurable variable that allows a window into journalistic norms and priorities and argues that studies need to start addressing and analysing the ways in which changes, such as the adoption of social media, are changing journalistic practices and norms.

Whilst this study does not directly look at the impact on audiences; it can help hypothesise the impact this content might have in certain social spheres and audiences, and help demonstrate what the news production is anticipated to serve. The news is what keeps communities connected and informed beyond their social circles. Considering social media

use, it is fair to argue that the value that defines what it means to be a journalist, and what journalism should need to be altered to reflect modern society and communications.

The building blocks for journalism and what defines a journalist are widely debated and differ depending on the location and origins of the journalist. It is important to reiterate that this study was conducted on New Zealand-based journalists in a westernised, democratic environment. Additionally, Twitter is not the only platform journalist operate in, and the data collected in this research should not be considered to represent journalism as a whole, but rather a minor (though significant) aspect of communications. Nonetheless, journalists are widely regarded as having a role in democratic societies to provide citizens with the information they need to participate in their public sphere. Deuze (2005) says journalists' obligation is to keep the public informed. This research suggests that journalists are not necessarily performing journalistic roles on social media platforms. The data showed that journalists treat social media as any other user would; their occupation did not determine the content posted.

In addition, journalists are more open, and express freedom of speech on their individual Twitter feeds, as evidenced by the data collected in this research and supported by Deuze's 2005 study. That suggests that social media platforms such as Twitter promote transparency in journalism. As Twitter does not exactly allow for anonymity (via connecting social media feeds together such as Instagram and Facebook), it means that accounts are not only readily available but easily traceable. Therefore, journalists can be held directly accountable for the content produced, shared or retweeted. Supported by Brautovic et al.

(2013) and Lasorsa et al. (2012), social media has allowed journalists to freely express an opinion and engage openly with other social media regardless of personal or news content, and regardless of contractual (or another governing body) obligations. By not regulating journalist's personal social media feeds it allows the perception of the free flow of information and supports theories around electronic democracy and building towards a more cosmopolitan news environment.

The relationship between journalism and Twitter is still unclear. While journalists' use of Twitter is autonomous and independent, news organisations use of Twitter is more of a symbiotic relationship and contains commercial imperatives. Molyneux said it best, that "journalism and Twitter have a unique, compelling relationship where the affordances of the medium meet journalistic needs and journalists are well positioned to provide the constant flow of updates that Twitter thrives on" (2014: 1). Newsrooms utilise Twitter as a source of information and a mouthpiece to maintain a flow of communication with a vast audience, while journalists post on Twitter like most other users, communicating a cocktail of work, personal, social and cat-related content. This research helps highlight the multifaceted use of Twitter and its enabling of different approaches to traditional journalistic forms.

Due to the increase in social media use, there is possibly a need for alternative definitions for journalists who take to online forums over traditional mediums. Hermida (2010) indicates that social media is more of an "awareness system" serving fragments of news for audiences to build their knowledge base of a specific event. As the data showed,

Newshub is the perfect example of this as they provide a mix of snippets of texts, hyperlinks, images, videos, and access to articles. Hermida's (2010) study concluded that processes within journalism would need to develop approaches and systems that can assist the public and audiences with negotiating the constant streams and flows of information to communicate news content better. The consistent flow of information and volume of material accessible on Twitter could be perceived as overwhelming. Therefore journalists need to do more to guide audiences or followers to the important content. The evidence of content repetition and saturation in the data suggests that newsrooms are not doing enough to assist readers in guiding them to the relevant content on Twitter.

To date, there is no literature to advance on 'awareness systems' theory, but this study provides support for the notion that journalistic processes involving social media (in particular Twitter) should provide audiences with the base 'need to know' information. The data highlighted an exchange between *Newshub* and an audience member who wanted more in terms of access to the full content rather than snippets of texts.

Furthermore, this research also demonstrates that the term for 'awareness system' does not account for the other variations of content. The data from the Representative sample clearly indicated that there is a myriad of content on individual journalists Twitter feeds. The autonomous nature of Twitter appears to allow journalists to have free reign on expanding on news content; meaning that there is room for bias and commentary that may influence the perception of news related or referenced content. Bias related implications have been mentioned in the past (Molyneux 2014 and Lasorsa 2012), and due to the

evidence in this research, it can be strongly suggested that social media has given room for journalist's freedom of expression despite their governing professional duties. Highlighting this freedom is important as journalist's expression is happening alongside that of their employment provider; Twitter does not distinguish or categorise content. The data showed that there was evidence of bias via commentary, but it is not significant enough to be considered influential. However, because bias exists to some degree, it can be argued the social media impacts on the ability of a journalist to remain objective. Twitter's clear cut presentation and allowance for engagement do result in the ability for journalists to stay transparent with the content they produce, despite a reduction of objectivity. Supporting this, previous studies have concluded the journalists adopt social media traits such as accountability and transparency in place of objectivity and accuracy (Lasorsa et al.'s 2012, Hedman 2016, and Brautovic et al.'s 2013); highlighting that while journalists become more relaxed in terms or norms and duties, and allow social media trends to assist in guiding the presentation of content.

Autonomy, Branding, and Relatability

As discussed above, the ability for journalists to act autonomously on Twitter opens the potential for self-branding and promotion. As a part of the logic of social media, there is the capacity to better develop a public perception and a self-brand or image. Molyneux (2014) describes an emerging practice in which self-promotion via social media is a way to bring in followers, invite interactions, and spark opportunities to retweet. A few journalists from this research did meet the requirements of self-promotion, and although it was not a concept that was initially designed into the original methodology, it is worth noting that it

was still evident in the data. The ability to self-promote and develop a brand comes from a few primary factors highlighted in the data and Molyneux (2014) study, they are; direct promotion, open commentary about job-related topics, consistent use of personal pronouns, retweets from colleagues or news organisations, retweets from other users that positively reflects themselves, and openly discussing criticisms. The ability to freely build a brand and positive reputation greatly enhance a journalist's ability to create positive relationships with audiences as they are considerably transparent, as their tweets are not subjected to "layers of editing and filtering that finished news products are" (Molyneux 2014). It is not to say that the future of journalism may introduce conditions of editing and consent to monitoring individual journalist Twitter usage, but the ability to develop an image reputation is a delicate process.

Expanding on branding, this content depicted an example of humanising news content. The case develops a 'man on the ground' or 'first-hand account' mentality to foreign news subjects, and in doing so make to content more relatable to a News Zealand audience. The example of sending Chang to document the aftermath of cyclone Zena in Fiji gives raw and unedited context, and opportunity to evoke more of an emotional response to a natural event. By sending Chang to Fiji it humanises the event as it gives something for audiences to connect with when it is produced by New Zealand news organisations, and it does develop more of an emotional, behind the scenes impact on the news event.

Conversation, Engagement, and Replies

The emergence of the internet and social media has allowed the public to go beyond the bounds of the newspaper and six o'clock news to obtain news content, and self-investigate or inquire about news content. Twitter is a prime example of this new connection where the public has an immediate and direct access to both news organisations and journalists. However, the minimal level of news content expressed by journalists on Twitter found in this study implies that news content is not obligatory.

From this research, it can be argued that journalists need to represent their occupation and news organisation on all platforms. However, as the data suggests, New Zealand journalists' posts on Twitter are similar to other users. Their content is mixed, and does not resemble that of journalists followed in other related studies. This could be due to a few factors: firstly, the way the representative sample was constructed as it was designed to sample a cross section of journalists and not focus on the ones with high followers or high tweeted content. Second (and more realistic), could be that Twitter is not a prominent social media platform used by New Zealand. It is the level of engagement that helps drive Twitter, and as exemplified in the data; there is not a lot of engagement or connection between journalists and followers. Furthermore, there is a minimal connection between news organisations and followers. As mentioned previously, those who follow news organisations appear to continue a one way of communication format where audiences are receptive to content rather than responsive.

Previous studies have indicated the audiences can independently navigate the flow of information on social media platforms (Hermida 2010 and Lee 2009). Lee commented that “audience members do a fair amount of their own filtering, amplifying, and interpreting of the flow of information” (2009: 185), and Hermida’s (2010) study looked at para-journalism and the use of social media platforms as a method for “awareness systems” and the emergence of ambient journalism. The two studies mentioned above take different approaches to a similar situation; audiences engagement and the concept of what service journalism provides on social media sites. Lee (2009) indicates that it is up to the audiences to develop the necessary tools to better navigate the flow of information, and if that is the case then news organisations need to be doing all they can to provide clear cut information that is not clouded by sensationalism and deceptive tag lines.

The data collected clearly reflects a level of engagement in the representative sample, but it is not clear if this engagement is among followers, friends or colleagues. The analysis addressed a conversation between Strongman and a member of the public where she invites him to discuss his frustrations on a professional forum (implying emails); this could suggest she does not accept Twitter as a space for public debate, or that she is trying to direct the user into a relationship where the professional journalist turns the user into source for news content, performing her skills as a professional journalist. It is difficult to measure intentions behind engagement on social media. Notably, Strongman’s work related interactions on Twitter were guided away from social media, maintaining a state of professionalism.

Redefine the Term Journalist

The term journalist has a range of definitions. As articulated, the term journalist used in this research more so refers to the reporters; an occupation outlined by an individual's ability to collect, write, and distribute factual content. However, the term journalist does not appear to fit well with the emerging modern concept of journalism. A lot of the literature looked at for this research has addressed that the internet and social media has impacted on the world of journalism (Lasorsa et al. 2012, Hedman 2016, Brautovic et al. 2013, Molyneux 2014, Hermida 2010, and Lee 2009), and that both academically and practically there need to be more clear terms and definitions for the role of the modern journalist (Deuze 2005, and Steensen and Ahva 2015). This research allows development of the argument that journalists who use social media alter their title to include definitions as content creators. The evidence to suggest this lies in the following paragraphs as there are examples of magazine like elements and click bait related tactics, that relate to journalism but do not necessarily meet the definitions of professional news journalists.

If there is a reconstruction of the term journalist and the way journalism is perceived, then the educational composition used in training future journalists ideally needs to be addressed. Steensen and Ahva (2015) looked at the world of journalism and journalism studies in the digital age, and address that "journalism is not marked by a specific and shared academic culture" (2015: 2); and that way in which journalists are being educated and trained may not be reflective of the times. Steensen and Ahva's study argued that even with the evidence of over 100 different theories guiding the study of journalism, there are still strong ties to the old perspectives of journalism (2015: 13). Further suggesting

that there is a need to reassess the term journalism and what it entails especially in connection with social media. Deuze's 2005 study helps demonstrate that the terms that define a journalist and journalism as a profession are a bit out of date and that there is now more to a journalist than just informing the public of recent events. Application of the older techniques, routines and theories of journalism in modern day media is a bit like using a recipe to make a pie from the 1900's. The ingredients are the same, but the new technologies have altered the process.

Shareable Content, Zine Elements, and Structure

Studies around tweeted content are growing, especially about journalists as the content has the ability to help build discussions around theories and traditions of what a journalist should do. As the data from the research has shown, the journalists followed, produced a range of content that encompasses content that is not news or work related. Therefore, it can be said that New Zealand-based journalists who are active on Twitter are not constricted by their professional duties when it comes to tweeting, sharing, or posting content. Amongst the collected content there is evidence to suggest that both the representative sample and purposive sample are replicating online strategies that may not be considered conducive to traditional practices or values of journalism. These key strategies or communicative concepts that were evident are as follows: designing content into a compact package to make it shareable, employing zine like elements the make news content more sensational, and overall content structure.

Amongst the content collected from both sample groups, evidence arose of tweets that pertained to news content but were not presented in the same way. Upon further investigation, these tweets showed traits that are not commonly associated with news journalism. Clickbait is a term that could be used to describe misleading tweets, but the data shows that the content is more sensationalised and not quite as misleading as click bait intends. It is understood and has been acknowledged that click bait exists and is paired with news content on social media platforms, but academics have not yet directly addressed this as an implication for news journalism (Molyneux 2014).

Applying graphic design to news content is considerable regarding newspaper layouts, but using it online is an efficient way to micro packaging content into short shareable and consumable nuggets of news information, which fit in seamlessly with the ideal types of content on Twitter. *Stuff.co.nz* started to introduce new social media layouts near the end of the data collection process; that combine image and text for an easily disseminate package. Like layouts used by *Buzzfeed*, *LADBible*, *9Gag*, and *Imgur*, that have demonstrated repeatedly, that using micro-packaged content results in shares, likes, retweets and follows. It could be suggested the introduction of graphically composed content by news organisations is their way of competing in a sea of content; However, *Newshub* contradicts this as the analysis helped demonstrate their application of just using text-based tweets. It is a catch twenty-two, by utilising alternative communicative means for news content, the likelihood of growing their audience base and disseminating news content might grow, while the alteration of the presentation of the content might undermine the meaning and credible nature of the both the news organisation and news

content. Changes in the presentation of news content greatly support McLuhan's claim that it is "the medium is the message," and that there is a symbiotic relationship between the content and the medium on which the content is presented. Therefore, an argument can be made that journalists are presenting news content in alternative forms to help either; reach a broad audience base or attempt to maintain a level of journalism about modern technologies.

As magazine article writing falls under the umbrella of journalism, these critiques are to be taken with a grain of salt, as there are close relations regarding news reporting and feature article writing. By understanding that a portion of the content production by news organisations is, or associated with, zine elements; then the connotations and denotations attached to zine elements can be applied. Within magazine elements and zine cultures, it is common to see critiques of one's social approaches, personal routines, and physical appearance; if evidence of zine elements exists in news content, then the content itself becomes reflective of these critiques. The evidence of zine elements in the form of cliff-hanging titles or suggestive imagery ties in with the presentation of graphic design related content as mentioned above, again contributing to reinforce the alternative packaging of news content.

A point made in the analysis outlined the use of headlines, and how they have their own grammatical and vocabulary rules, known as 'headlines.' A crucial aspect to this is if these headlines with a specific grammatical structure become connotative representations of news related content, then there is the potential for other media organisations to utilise

‘headlinese’ in an attempt to frame their content as important as news content. In other words: The use of certain words and grammatical points in headline structures by non-news organisations has the potential to give the impression the non-news content is as important as news content. The same could be said for news organisations using non ‘headlinese’ structure to help communicate a different connotation for the provided content. By possessing the ability and freedom to manipulate the headline of a news article suggests that there is some capacity to manipulate audience perceptions of both the content and news organisations.

It is the introduction of sensationalised content and zine elements that reinforce arguments around journalists and what their occupation entails. Rather than reporting the news, it could be suggested that journalists should be considered as content creators, as they shape, frame, and generate stories. The presentation of the content is important because that it impacts the potential perception of the content. For example, by framing news content in a way that would better fit a feature article in a magazine, the news content might be perceived as having softer similar connotations that would be associated with magazine content.

News Content and News Values

News values were a critical aspect of this study as they helped to illustrate potential priorities constructed within the news cycle. In 2016 during the data collection process, O’Neill and Harcup published a re-evaluated set of news values. For the purpose of this

discussion, the focus will be on their initial set of news values (2001), which were applied to tweets to help define, or give purpose to, the content that was disseminated. This study showed a dominance of news values relating to negative connotations, and in comparison, positively connotative stories were less common. The tweets collected in the data showed that there was a strong prominence for negatively orientated news content, which might indicate that news posted on social media is angled to be more adverse (in comparison to other news mediums).

The representative sample was reflective of the purposive sample in terms of the hierarchy of news values. The most prominent news value in the data was relevance news. The analysis elaborated on this by highlighting a strong preference for sport related content, and the unconfirmed relationship the New Zealand population has with patriotic sporting events such as rugby, netball, cricket, and the 2016 Olympic games. News values have the ability to be universally applied, but the environment and cultural influences are what depicts the dominant and weaker news priorities. If New Zealand was not so sport orientated, then the data might reflect a different hierarchy system. News values hierarchy can also be reflective of the types of journalism; for example, tabloid journalism or investigative journalism might yield different priorities in their news content. The strong level of relevance news articles also helps to reinforce the connection that journalists are seeking stories with audiences. Content that would generate mass appeal and is conducive to building a wider audience helps to reinforce news organisations' traditional norms. Relevance news helps to establish a sense of community connection. Furthermore, by being

in touch with and serving the needs of the public, relevance helps demonstrate that even though Twitter is a different medium, it does not completely alter the news process.

The news values that were highlighted in the data as not being as prominent were; newspaper agenda, good news, follow up, and non-applicable stories. Just because these news values were not as prominent, does not mean that they are less important in the newsroom. As previously mentioned, there is a dominance of negative and sensationalist news content might help exemplify why there is a subordinate level of good or positive news values. Furthermore, the lack of evidence to suggest follow up news content helps to illustrate the fast pace process and selection of news.

One of the weaker news values was newspaper agenda, and while it is understandable that this value is more easily applicable to print-based content, this research positioned it as a newsroom agenda. It can be assumed that the agenda placed on print-based news publication and broadcast-based news publications will exhibit some degree of agenda. Newspaper agenda were difficult to be applied to tweets because the clarity of the news organisations agenda was not well presented on Twitter, and prompted investigations into the news content. Furthermore, that data suggested that news organisations did not hide that they used Twitter as a promotional tool. Rather than skew or generate content that positions the news organisation in a positive context, the open and clear use of Twitter as a promotional tool demonstrates a level of resourcefulness that allows news organisations to cross promote content from print, broadcast, online, and radio.

In 2016 during the data collection process of this research, O'Neill and Harcup revised news values for the second time and revised a larger portion of news content via newspapers over a four-week period. Upon reviewing O'Neill and Harcup's findings, it is interesting to conclude that the data from their research corresponds to the data found in this research. Their second revised list kept: bad news, surprise, entertainment, follow-up, the power elite, relevance, magnitude, celebrity, good news, news organisation's agenda, and introduced exclusivity, conflict, share-ability, and drama. The data in this research showed a few areas where it became difficult to confine the news content to a News Value. However, O'Neill and Harcup's (2016) introduction of share-ability fits seamlessly into the hyped news content. As discussed above, share-ability is an important construct of social media and can be seen as building on social media tactics such as sensationalism, wording and framing, and graphic design or layout. O'Neill and Harcup reiterate that news values

“can be contested since they are also governed by practical considerations, such as the availability of resources and time, and subjective, often unconscious, influences, such as a mix of the social, educational, ideological and cultural influences on journalists, as well as the environment in which they work, their position in the workplace hierarchy and the type of audience for whom journalists are producing news” (2016: 15).

News values are a pliable tool and help to construct an understanding of news content in a modern media orientated society.

To summarise, the points developed in this discussion have built on the interactions of Twitter users, presentations and potential interpretations of the news content. The main aspects in the data highlighted that there is evidence of autonomous Twitter use, content creation, and meaningful engagement by journalists. Furthermore, the data suggests that social media are challenging the traditional norms of journalism, as journalists do not appear to be using Twitter as a news publishing platform, but rather for posting other types of content. This suggests that the term 'journalist' is evolving beyond traditional norms at least in conjunction with social media.

The data also helped to provide insight into news organisations' implementation of Twitter and its use as an asset in not only the news cycle, but also for generating content, developing and potentially engaging with audiences, and as a promotional platform. The alternative presentation of news content on Twitter was one of the stronger features from this study, as the repackaging of news content appeared to make it more relatable and more shareable (O'Neil and Harcup 2016). The structure of news on Twitter adopted new graphic design techniques, creative headline syntax, repetition, and elements more commonly associated with magazines. The ability to develop new means to share news content on different mediums reinforces McLuhan's the "medium is the message" (1964), as the content is altered to fit social media. Furthermore, the alternate representation of news content on social media might be reflective of changes in newsroom processes.

News values are an aid that help to code news content to establish its intention and to highlight news cycle process. News values helped to reinforce the application of traditional

newsroom practices. The evidence of news values suggests that the practice of journalism competencies (objectivity, gatekeeping, transparency) is still being imposed. Additionally, news values also helped to establish a connection between journalists and news organisations as both sample groups showed the same priorities and preferences in terms of news content.

CHALLENGES, LIMITATIONS, AND RESTRICTIONS WITH THIS STUDY

Changes, Challenges and Limitations of the Pilot Study

Prior to the initial two-week data collection, a pilot study was undertaken to ensure the logistics of the methodology. The pilot study alluded to a few issues that were amended in the full data collection process. The main points that arose from the pilot study were: defining a representative sample of journalists, categorising content and allowing for various personal content, coding different types of content, the possibility of deleted or edited content, the reliability of journalists to tweet routinely or enough to allow significant levels of data to be collected.

Changes, Challenges and Limitations of the Full Study

With any study, there are limits and restrictions. As outlined previously, social media is a complex labyrinth and representative populations on social media sites are difficult to define. This is the main concern and limitation with this study. The New Zealand news journalists population on Twitter is hard to define. There is no resource or reference list to check the journalist demographic on Twitter, making it tough to measure Twitter use among journalists. As such, obtaining a representative sample has proven to be the most challenging aspect of this research. There are limited resources that allow researchers the ability to more closely define variables, such as identifying individual news journalists, which journalists are likely to tweet, the generation gap, gender gap, whether all journalists tweet, and therefore determine whether there sample is a fair representation of all journalists and contractual obligations from a news organisation. As a result, this research

uses the term 'representative' loosely, as constructing a fair and accurate representation of news journalists is unobtainable and impractical. The representative sample has been manually built to represent the population of New Zealand news journalists on Twitter appropriately

The primary purpose of this research is to look at the content produced by New Zealand news journalists, but it raised more questions than answers. Challenges and limitations depicted within this research are centralised around the following; selection of the journalist demographic to follow and collect data from, audience and meaningful engagement, journalists commercial and contractual obligations, the environment the news is being produced and disseminated in (developed democratic western society), understanding what was and what is currently the role of news journalism, time constraints, and the polysemic nature of news content.

Common challenges with journalism studies are the ability to accurately address the journalism demographic in a given democratic western society (Lasorsa et al. 2012). While this research has endeavoured to create a representative sample, that best reflects news journalist on Twitter in New Zealand, the application for choosing was based on the ability of the author to locate and follow journalists. Replication of this research may run into issues along the lines of whom to select to collect data. The representative sample in this research attempted to collate journalists who had a similar number of followers at the time of the study, as this implied the potential audience reach. It is common place for studies to select journalists who have a high volume of followers or who generate a lot of content, but

this does not accurately reflect news journalists as it focuses on the individuals who have a more 'celebrity' like status.

Followers on Twitter help imply or dictate potential audience and audience reach. However, there are limitations on proving the demographic of the followers. It is difficult to define those who follow and engage with other Twitter users as there is no defining feature to indicate whether they are fans, friends, colleagues, or organisations, or a mixture of all of them. For this study, regarding referencing followers, the idea 'perceived audience' is used and it is based on the population demographic rather than the online demographic. By building a concept and knowing the audience's demographic might help explain some of the news preferences and the kinds of content audiences are inclined to engage with. It did not help that this research showed that there is a low level of follower engagement with news organisations on Twitter, which could be reflective of New Zealand society, or that audiences are rejecting Twitter as a news source. Twitter is not a strongly established social media platform in New Zealand and was not originally intended for the serious nature of news content. This is a significant limitation for similar research, as it could be considered more beneficial to partake in research that has previously proven a significant level of audience or follower engagement to help depict if audience and journalist engagement on social media is meaningful. As mentioned previously, news organisations Twitter feeds are treated very much like newspapers, people read through them but do not appear to interact with them.

Compiling observational research such as this does provide substantial data that helps reflect the news environment in the online sphere, but it does not account for the perceptions, contracts, and job obligations that the journalists may have to adhere to which has the potential to influence or sway the content. Without knowing the journalists or their contractual obligations does assist in removing any bias and potential preconceptions from the research, but it also restricts the research in terms of assumptions and understanding the journalists and news organisations point of view, plans and approaches for social media, and their own statistical data via social media sites. Interviews with journalists and editors would, therefore, have both a benefit and its own shortcomings. Access to news organisations databases might allow for a clearer perception of audience construct and news content engagement. Resolutions to these kinds of limitations can be addressed in areas for future research.

In conjunction with the representative sample, the purposive sample showed that news organisations are using alternative means to present and disseminate content that challenges traditional news journalism; by eliminating news content text-based structure and formatting and the timely news cycle to better fit the nature of Twitter fits the ideals by McLuhan “the medium is the message.” With presenting content to better fit, an alternate medium also highlights the challenge this study had allocating news values like the ability to draw lines between news and alternated content became difficult. This is due to news values application in a more structured platform in print-based newspapers, compared to the fluid medium of social media. Additionally, the news values used in this study can be perceived as outdated as a new set was introduced by Harcup and O’Neil in 2016.

Furthermore, there is no user guide or manual for how to apply news values, they have just become ingrained in academic studies around journalism, and are utilised as the author sees fit.

The unpredictable nature of social media will be a consistent challenge for future studies. Twitter presents itself in chronological order, however, after approximately 2,000 tweets, the content becomes removed from the feed; this means that there are time pressures for collecting data. There are data mining sites and programs that can collate social media content, except they are expensive and the results are accessible to other authors and researchers. By having a hands-on approach may mean a slight variance in data and limitations with the amount of content that can be collected, but it does allow for a more in-depth analysis as the researcher is more immersed in the content rather than just the statistical representations. The ability to be immersed in the data allows the capacity for observational content analysis.

AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Expanding on this research, there are areas and aspects of the journalism industry in both academia and practice that could be addressed to better develop the journalism profession. In the process of conducting this research, the main areas for future research include: closer analysis of the relationship between social media and journalism, ethnographic studies of practising journalists on social media, interviews, audience surveys on their perception of news values, news content and journalism, keyword searches, image-based analysis, and looking at the relationship between journalism practices and journalism studies.

The primary area for further examination is the analysis of the relationship between social media and journalism industry; however, this concept is broad and encompasses a wide scope of the journalism processes. Studies might involve; social media's impact on the news cycle regarding gathering content to presenting, comparative analysis of content presented online verses presented in print to see if there are any parallels or differences, and evidence of traditional journalism duties. A large portion of similar studies appear to focus on duties, norms and routines of journalists in a preconceived demographic (Lasorsa et al. 2012 and Brautovic et al. 2013), and are not aimed at helping to grow and develop future journalists. An alternative approach is to look at the training and education processes for future journalists and the impact these have on the practice of journalism.

This research is based on observation, and removed from the influence or direct contact of the sample groups, and suggests an 'outside looking in' perspective. An ethnographic study would provide a way to observe journalists in their day to day practices and habits. Utilising ethnographically based studies could provide a stepping stone to better understanding journalism and its relationship with modern technologies and social networks. The limitation with an ethnographic study would be around tracking journalist's practice outside the newsroom setting? It is not deemed appropriate to follow a journalist for twenty-four hours, seven days a week. However, the allure of compiling information on the way journalists communicate, what they communicate, and what provocative or directive influences govern their communication habits could provide great insight into the journalism industry. To supplement or build on ethnographic studies, having the capacity to interview journalists who both do and do not use social media platforms will be a great benefit in understanding the intention behind the use of social media (Lasorsa et al. 2012 and Brautovic et al. 2013). Having the ability to openly document active journalists will help show how they feel about using social media, how they square its use with their understanding of professional practice, and whether the role of the journalist has shifted from traditional norms.

Future research focusing on social media could also help shape content presented on social media, by revealing what works in the online sphere. Networking and the structure and framing of content are what contribute to the success of content on social media, and by investigating social media (including beyond Twitter), strategies could be developed to help distinguish the sensational content from the serious content as the line between the

two becomes seemingly blurred. Studies involving other social media sites or social media mobile applications, such as YouTube or Snapchat, could give a better interpretation to the visual devices used in news content communication. Expanding on content related research on social media, constructing methodologies around keyword search, grammar structure, use of pronouns or cliff hanging sentences, might be able to better address the shift in framing content on social media. Regardless of the approach, research involving social media is important as it helps address and suggest methods for journalism to better adapt to modern means of communication, and priorities in relatable news content.

CONCLUSION

By looking at the content produced by New Zealand news journalists and news organisations, this research was able to provide a brief snapshot of journalists' and news organisations content uses and priorities on Twitter. This research was inspired by and set to build on O'Neill and Harcup's 2001 study in modern media formats, and to discover the extent to which traditional journalism news process are still in practice. News values were a critical component to help identify the differences and priorities of news content on Twitter, and potentially other social media forums. News values helped to distinguish between news and alternate content, helping to establish that there is evidence of traditional values when it comes to the news process on social media.

Most journalists from the representative sample appear to be relatively independent with their Twitter use; it appears to be up to them as to what they produce, share, tweet or retweet on their own accounts. The content analysis highlighted that individual journalist's tweeting habits and posts were like that of an everyday user. The main content that came from New Zealand journalists was personal and conversational, which provided the opportunity for followers to get to know journalists a bit more intimately. Journalists provided a 'behind the scenes' feel with their content, helping to suggest that journalists are providing a more humanised or emotional element to journalism. It was, however, difficult to discern whom journalists were conversing with, making it hard to conclude how meaningful their engagement was on social media. It was not clear if journalists were talking to followers, friends, or colleagues, resulting in uncertainty about how well journalists implement Twitter as a means for facilitating public discussion. However, there was a clear

example to suggest that in terms of more critical opinions from the public, the conversation was directed away from social media.

The representative sample and the purposive sample both utilised Twitter as a promotional tool or platform. From the representative sample, promotions appeared to come mostly from broadcast-based journalists, and the content was about a reality television series screening on the same network. This example of journalists promoting content might suggest that their governing employer might hold some say over the content they produced, but the evidence was not strong enough to support this. The purposive sample showed a different picture. News organisations focused primarily on news content and demonstrated minimal promotion or engagement. Additionally, it was the broadcast-based organisations that appeared to promote their televised programs alongside news content, and the radio-based sample their news shows.

The data also showed that news organisations were presenting content differently on social media. The purposive sample demonstrated the use of zine elements, repetition, graphic design, alternative wording, 'top 5' lists, and layouts. The formatting can be described as news organisations modernising the news to fit the format of social media, contextualising content and making it relevant for their followers and prospective audience. The screen shots within the analysis show that the news content on Twitter was packaged concisely, usually consisting of minimal text, a hyperlink, and an image.

News values were used as a tool to help differentiate between news, personal, promotional, sensational, or commentary content. As the data and analysis depicted, much of news content on Twitter related to the news value, relevance. As previously mentioned relevance looks at the relationship the content has with the prospective audience and helps imply the consideration news organisations put into the priorities of the news cycle.

Coincidentally, this research highlighted the dominance of the more negative and sensational news stories, with fewer soft, good news and obvious agenda-related stories on social media. With news organisations showcasing more serious news events right beside sensational content might result in the misconception of the content. It can be suggested that the use of Twitter to disseminate news content could result in the more serious news stories not being taken as seriously as intended, or sensational stories taking the spotlight.

To conclude, I hope my research inspires others to pursue studies in the journalism field. My aim is that it also contributes to a more professional and transparent journalism industry that is better equipped to deal with the emergence of new technologies, social media, and means of communication. As the news environment changes and the future development of social media and communication capabilities are unclear, it is fair to state that there need to be consistent endeavours to analyse and evaluate the relationship between social media and journalism.

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